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## The Louisiana Children's Museum: A Time of Transition

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The Louisiana Children's Museum: A Time of Transition

An Internship Report

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
University of New Orleans  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts  
in  
Arts Administration

by

Kathleen Rachel Ledet

B.A. University of New Orleans, 2007

December 2014

## **Dedication**

This Master's Report is dedicated to my parents, Britt Ledet and Florence Doucet Ledet, for their constant support, encouragement, and guidance toward all of my pursuits, especially my educational development. It is also dedicated to my late aunt and godmother, Mitzi Doucet Thibodaux, who taught me that perseverance, hard work, and a kind heart are the keys to success.

## **Acknowledgement**

I would like to thank the Louisiana Children's Museum (LCM) for providing me with such a rewarding internship experience. Thanks to LCM's supportive staff members, I was able to learn and grow as a nonprofit professional in a welcoming, nurturing environment. I would particularly like to thank Lisa Sibal for her invaluable assistance in providing information for this report, as well as for her guidance and encouragement during my transition from intern to special events coordinator at LCM.

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## **Abstract**

This report details an internship with the Louisiana Children's Museum's development office, which started in February 2014; transitioned from internship to employment in May 2014; and concluded in June 2014 after the Museum's fundraising event, Circus Magic Night. In this paper, I will provide an overview of the Museum's history, programs, and organizational structure, as well as describe my internship experience and contributions over a period of five months and 480 hours. Additionally, I will analyze LCM's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats; discuss relevant best practices; and finally, offer recommendations that propose solutions to some of the challenges I observed as the development/special events intern and as the new special events coordinator.

Keywords: Louisiana Children's Museum, Early Learning Village, Development, Fundraising, Special Events, Fundraising Events



# Chapter 1: Profile of the Organization

## A. History and Mission

The Louisiana Children's Museum was incorporated as a 501(c)3 nonprofit in 1984, but it did not open its big blue doors to visitors until October 1986, after years of research, planning, fundraising, and construction. Housed on the third floor of a nineteenth-century warehouse in downtown New Orleans, the original Museum utilized 8,000 square feet of rented space to provide eight exhibits for visiting and local families to enjoy. Eight years after the Museum opened, its Board of Directors purchased the entire Julia Street warehouse, more than quintupling the Museum's square footage to 45,000.<sup>1</sup>

Ten years after its expansion, the Museum continued to thrive. In 2004, the *Zagat U.S. Family Travel Guide*, produced in association with *Parenting Magazine*, listed LCM as the top children's museum in their survey. That same year, the Museum hosted the Association of Children's Museums' interactivity conference and co-hosted the American Association of Museums' (currently the American Alliance of Museums) conference.<sup>2</sup>

Just one year later, in August 2005, the Museum faced one of its most difficult challenges—how to recover after Hurricane Katrina. With over \$1 million in damages, the Museum closed for ten months and saw its staff shrink from forty to four.<sup>3</sup> When LCM reopened in June 2006, the board and staff, now up to sixteen, re-focused their efforts to expand the Museum's presence in the Greater New Orleans community by growing its educational programming outside the walls of the Museum. Over the past eight years, LCM has developed

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<sup>1</sup> Anderson, Miriam, "An Internship with the Louisiana Children's Museum" (1996), Arts Administration Master's Reports, Paper 51, Pages 4-5.

<sup>2</sup> Appendix A.

<sup>3</sup> MacCash, Doug, "Bouncing Back: The Louisiana Children's Museum Reopens with a Free Celebration This Weekend and an Eye toward Helping Kids Cope with Post-K Living." *The Times-Picayune*, June 23, 2006, *NewsBank*, EBSCOhost, Accessed October 12, 2014.

offsite educational programs like Play Power, as well as parental engagement programs like Family Fest, Prime Time, and Word Play. The Museum's quality education programming has brought two First Ladies to visit LCM: Laura Bush in 2009 and Michelle Obama in 2011.<sup>4</sup>

After Katrina, the Museum's board and staff started planning an expansion of LCM's facilities with a move to City Park. This project, called the Early Learning Village (ELV), will not only give the Museum a bigger physical footprint in the community with eight acres of indoor and outdoor space, but it will also give LCM and its partners a greater opportunity to serve the community's children and parents through quality educational offerings, all set in an enriching, state-of-the-art environment.<sup>5</sup>

Today, the Museum welcomes about 120,000 visitors each year from parishes throughout Louisiana, states across the country, and countries around the world. Its 30,000 square feet of exhibit space currently includes fourteen exhibits and weekly program offerings. Its three main audiences are children between birth and age twelve, their parents, and educators.<sup>6</sup>

The Museum's mission statement reads as follows:

The Louisiana Children's Museum promotes hands-on participatory learning for children of all ages. Encouraging discovery through observation, inquiry, creative construction, role-playing, problem-solving, and free play, the Museum motivates children to develop their cognitive, physical, and social skills, while enjoying fruitful interaction with adults and peers.<sup>7</sup>

## **B. Programs**

Each year LCM conducts over 400 educational programs, both on-site and off-site.<sup>8</sup> Over the past eight years, staff members have engaged in over 40,000 hours of on-site and off-site

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<sup>4</sup> Appendix A.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> LCM Website, "History & Mission," <http://lcm.org/history-mission>, Accessed September 6, 2014.

<sup>8</sup> Appendix A.

educational outreach programming. Many of these programs are guided by the “Reggio Emilia approach,” an educational philosophy that originated in Reggio Emilia, Italy, as the country tried to rebuild after World War II. Started in 1945 by Italian parents and guided by educator, Loris Malaguzzi, the Reggio Emilia approach focuses on the critical value of early childhood education. Its guiding principles, as listed on the North American Reggio Emilia Alliance’s website, include the following:

- “We hold a strong and optimistic image of the child who is born with many resources and extraordinary potentials.”
- “The 100 languages are a metaphor for the extraordinary potentials of children.” These languages can include “writing, drawing, paint, clay, wire, natural and recycled materials, light and shadow, dramatic play, music, and dance, etc.”
- “Participation values and fosters dialogue and the sense of belonging to a community.”
- “The flow of quality information via documentation introduces parents to a quality of knowing that tangibly changes expectations.”
- “Research represents one of the essential dimensions of life for children and adults, a knowledge-building tension that must be recognized and valued.”<sup>9</sup>

The Reggio Emilia approach has made a significant and lasting impact on LCM’s educational programming and exhibits. It helps the Education Department to determine what kinds of programs and exhibits LCM provides, and it shapes how these programs and exhibits are put into practice on a regular basis.

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<sup>9</sup> North American Reggio Emilia Alliance Website, “About NAREA,” <http://reggioalliance.org/narea/>, Accessed September 28, 2014.

LCM has partnered with many educational institutes, organizations, and groups over its twenty-eight years as an operating museum. Many of LCM's partners are involved with the Museum through other existing programs, partnerships, and grant applications. LCM's longest official partner has been eleven years with the Tulane Institute for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health. Other educational partners include the New Orleans Public Library; local Head Start Centers (some with weekly or monthly embedded LCM programs); New Orleans and St. Bernard Public Schools (three schools receive daily LCM programming); and a wide variety of public, private, and parochial schools in various parishes.<sup>10</sup>

LCM's educational programs focus on the following five areas: literacy; STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math); health and wellness; environmental education; and arts and culture. Some of LCM's premier program offerings, taken from its "Case Statement for Education" (Appendix A) and its "Commitment to Community Engagement" document (Appendix B), include the following:

- *Play Power* (since 2006): An offsite program where LCM educators are a fixed presence in two area elementary schools on a weekly basis (in Orleans and St. Bernard Parishes). Emphasis is given to literacy, science, and math, as well to building resiliency skills, as many of the children come from underserved communities.<sup>11 12</sup>
  - Outputs and Outcomes: Play Power is the Museum's signature off-site educational program. Documentation of its outputs reveal that Play Power educators have worked with nearly 10,000 students and spent

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<sup>10</sup> Interview with LCM Development Director, September 30, 2014.

<sup>11</sup> Appendix A.

<sup>12</sup> Appendix B.

approximately 19,000 hours with Play Power children over a twelve-month period. At one of the Play Power schools, kindergarten through second grade students saw their Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) scores increase with 7% – 63% gains after the Play Power program had been implemented. School staff cited that Play Power had a “contributing role” in the increase. Teacher evaluations of Play Power describe the ways in which children use the concepts they learn in the program: “[They] ask each other for advice in certain situations.” “[They use] teamwork strategies and vocabulary terms.”<sup>13</sup>

- *Literacy Pathways* (since 2008): Literacy Pathways are free on-site educational field trips, guided by LCM educators. They start with an interactive story time, move onto language-building exercises through three of the Museum’s exhibits, and end with handing children a copy of the book that was read and also with library card registration for children to the New Orleans Public Library.<sup>14</sup>
  - Outputs and Outcomes: Output data on Literacy Pathways over the 2013-2014 school year shows that LCM served 3,125 children at 31 Orleans and Jefferson Parish schools in grades kindergarten through second. Feedback from teachers in participating Literacy Pathways schools from last year include the following:
    - “I really liked how the activities coordinated with the story – the students were engaged the entire time.” – Harahan Elementary

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<sup>13</sup> Appendix C.

<sup>14</sup> Appendix B.

- “All the activities were great and I plan to use all of them in my classroom. We were glad it was free. We don’t get other free trips. Thanks so much!” – Bethune Elementary
  - “The students learned the value and interest of books and reading.” – Benjamin Franklin Elementary<sup>15</sup>
- *Word Play* (since 2012): A program provided at the Museum and at area schools, which focuses on the early development of language and literacy within a child’s home, school, and community. <sup>16</sup>
  - Outputs and Outcomes: Parents and caregivers attend six to eight ninety-minute sessions with their five to seven year-old children over several weeks. Families take home a “literacy goodie bag” with a free book and a home activity. Parents leave with tools to help build their child’s reading skills. Over the past two years, World Play has served over 250 participants.<sup>17</sup>
- *Sensory Friendly Family Nights* (since 2013) : An increasingly popular monthly event, which provides families who have children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) a free opportunity to have fun at LCM in a welcoming environment. These events also give parents the chance to connect with other parents and share resources. <sup>18</sup>
  - Outputs and Outcomes: As of October 2014, an estimated total of 400 children, parents, teachers, and caregivers have attended this year’s

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<sup>15</sup> Appendix D.

<sup>16</sup> Appendix A.

<sup>17</sup> Interview with LCM Community Engagement Coordinator, October 10, 2014.

<sup>18</sup> Appendix A.

monthly Sensory Friendly Family Nights. A new outcome this year provided young adults with ASD the opportunity to volunteer for these events by assisting at the art tables, signing in families, and helping to clean up. These volunteer assignments give the young adults with ASD the chance to build their job skills, while adding a new credit to their resumes as they prepare for college and/or entering the workforce. Feedback from teachers and parents participating in Sensory Friendly Family Nights include the following:

- “This is great. He never makes noise or says anything at school. His mom is going to be so happy.”
  - “Thank you for having us at a time where the Museum is a fun place for us and not overwhelming.”
  - “It’s so nice that y’all did this. We can’t come here on a normal day.”<sup>19</sup>
- *Art Trek* (since 1996): Offered at LCM four days a week, Art Trek is an art studio where children do much more than finger painting. Each week a different theme is highlighted, exposing children to different artists like Georgia O’Keefe and Andy Warhol, as well as to different genres like mixed media and mosaics.<sup>20</sup>
    - Outputs and Outcomes: Children have the opportunity to contribute to community art pieces that they can come back and view at the Museum. LCM’s art educator estimates that she teaches between 100 and 200 children a week in Art Trek. From January through September 2014, Art

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<sup>19</sup> Interview with LCM Director of Sensory Friendly Family Nights, October 4, 2014.

<sup>20</sup> Appendix A.

Trek reached an estimated 7,500 children. Families who home-school their children come in regularly to receive their art class for the week. LCM's art educator describes one home-schooled child she sees frequently: "He comes in Tuesdays and Thursdays to partake in all of the activities. He will sit in Art Trek for at least forty-five minutes, just exploring the materials and asking questions about the artists and techniques being presented."<sup>21</sup>

### **C. Governance and Management Structure**

The Museum's Board of Directors currently has twenty-seven members from a wide-range of backgrounds and expertise including the following areas: education, law, finance, marketing, insurance, fundraising, and event planning. The current Board Chair is David M. Farnsworth, Jr., who has served in this role since 2013.<sup>22</sup> Board members are elected to three-year terms and cannot serve more than two consecutive terms.<sup>23</sup> Over the past two years, the board has been made intentionally smaller to improve board engagement and to support better strategic oversight.<sup>24</sup> The current size of the board is more in line with other children's museums of LCM's size in the Gulf South. For example, the Mississippi Children's Museum in Jackson, Mississippi, currently has seventeen board members,<sup>25</sup> and the Glazer's Children's Museum in Tampa, Florida, currently has exactly the same number of board members as LCM at twenty-

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<sup>21</sup> Interview with LCM Art Educator, October 11, 2014.

<sup>22</sup> Interview with LCM Development Director, September 30, 2014.

<sup>23</sup> Appendix A.

<sup>24</sup> Interview with LCM Development Director, September 30, 2014.

<sup>25</sup> Mississippi Children's Museum Website, "Board of Directors," <http://www.mississippichildrensmuseum.com/about/board/>, Accessed October 2, 2014.



seven.<sup>26</sup> Board members can currently serve on the executive, finance, and nominating committees, as well as the following task forces:

- *Development Task Force* – Helps with strategy and planning for the annual appeal and major gifts.
- *Special Events Task Force* – Helps with strategy and planning for all special events (including volunteer recruitment and ticket sales).
- *Program Sponsorship Task Force* – Helps with strategy and planning in the solicitation of corporate support for the Museum’s educational programs.
- *Membership and Marketing Task Force* – Helps with strategy and planning for membership growth and marketing plans.

The goals of the Board are shaped by LCM’s Five-Year Strategic Plan (adopted in 2012), which is built upon cultivating these four areas: ensuring financial stability and growth, fostering organizational enablers, enhancing the visitor experience, and strengthening marketing/branding.<sup>27</sup>

While the board oversees the long-term direction of the Museum, its executive director, or chief executive officer (CEO - as LCM refers to the position), manages the day-to-day operations. Directly under the CEO is the deputy director, the chief education officer, and the development director. There are currently twenty-three full-time staff members and seventeen part-time staff members.

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<sup>26</sup> Glazer’s Children’s Museum Website, <http://glazermuseum.org/grown-up-stuff/meet-our-board>, Accessed October 2, 2014.

<sup>27</sup> Interview with LCM Development Director, September 30, 2014.

The following is an outline of LCM's management structure (see Figure 1):

- The **education office** is led by the chief education officer, who oversees the following staff:
  - Education program coordinator
  - Community engagement coordinator – who oversees all outreach staff, including the Play Power educators.
  - Visitor experience manager – who oversees exhibit facilitators and all Museum floor staff.
  - Art educator
- The **marketing office** is led by the deputy director, who oversees the following staff:
  - Marketing and membership coordinator (membership, after hours events, and social media)
  - Marketing and reservations coordinator (birthdays, groups, and donation requests)
- The **development office** is led by the development director, who oversees the following staff:
  - Special events coordinator
- The **Early Learning Village campaign** is led by the ELV project director, who oversees the following staff:
  - ELV campaign manager
  - ELV campaign assistant

- In addition to the marketing office, the deputy director also oversees the following staff:
  - Chief administrative officer – who oversees general operations and HR.
  - Business manager
  - Museum store manager
  - Maintenance

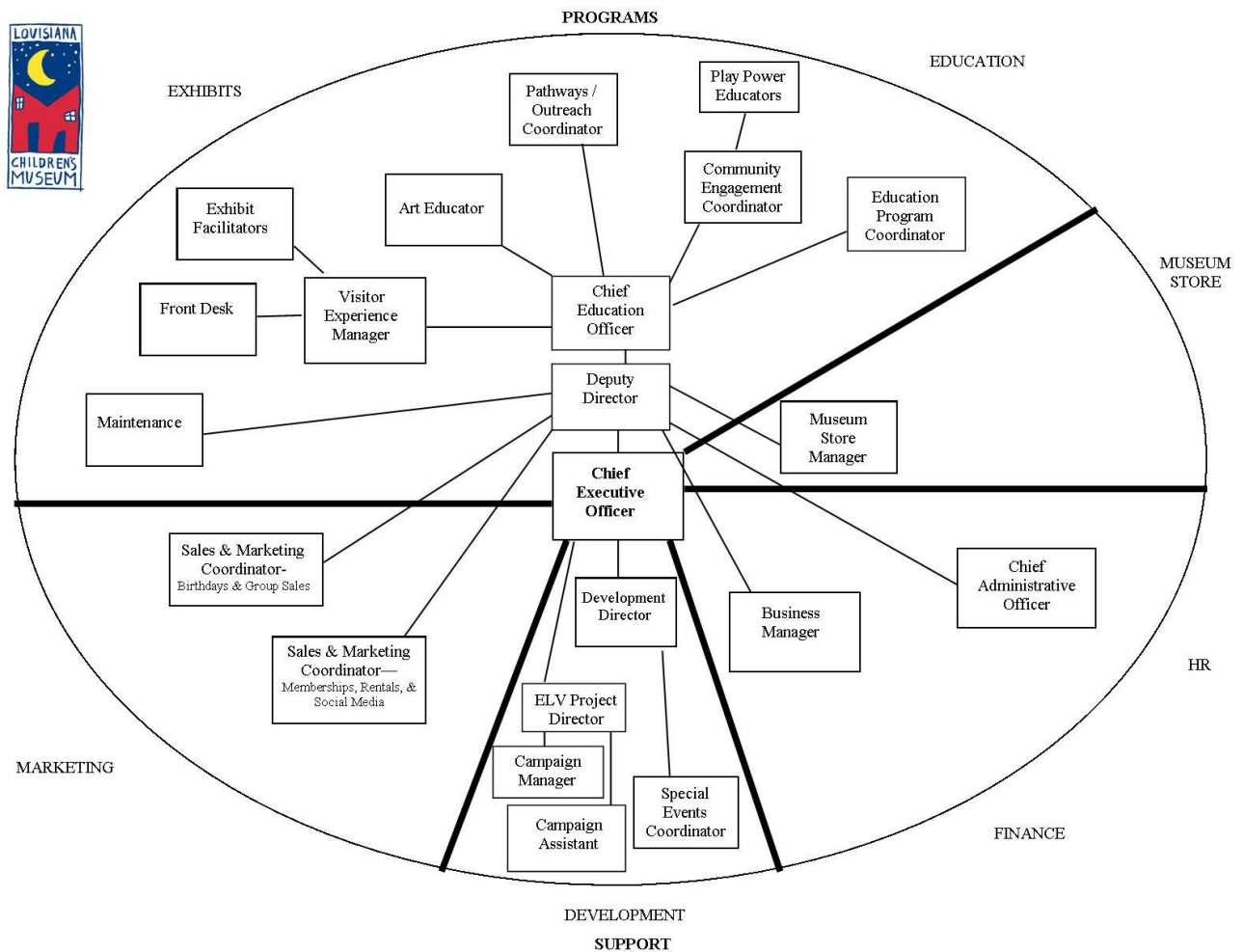


Figure 1 - LCM Management Structure

## **D. Budget and Fundraising**

According to LCM's most recent 990 form (FY January-December 2012), the Museum's total revenue was \$1,589,969, and its expenses were \$1,865,258, which put them at a deficit of \$275,289.<sup>28</sup> This net revenue variance reflects a timing disparity of multi-year gifts and reimbursable expenses for the ELV campaign (e.g., multi-year commitments, for which funding was received in years before 2012).<sup>29</sup>

### Contributed Revenue

About 45-50% of LCM's annual operating budget comes from contributed revenue, which is the responsibility of the development office. This contributed revenue helps keep admission to the Museum as affordable as possible. While the actual cost per person per visit to the Museum is about \$14.00, the current admission rate stands at only \$8.50.<sup>30</sup>

LCM's contributed revenue is generated from the following sources: grants, fundraisers, exhibit/program sponsorships, and general donations (including the annual fund). The most significant percentage of contributed revenue comes from grants, followed by special events, with general donations/annual fund and program/exhibit sponsorships each bringing in about 8% (see Figure 2). In 2014, the development director has focused on increasing individual giving (particularly through the annual fund), growing program and exhibit sponsorships from businesses and foundations, and working on securing funding for programs and exhibits twelve to eighteen months out.<sup>31</sup>

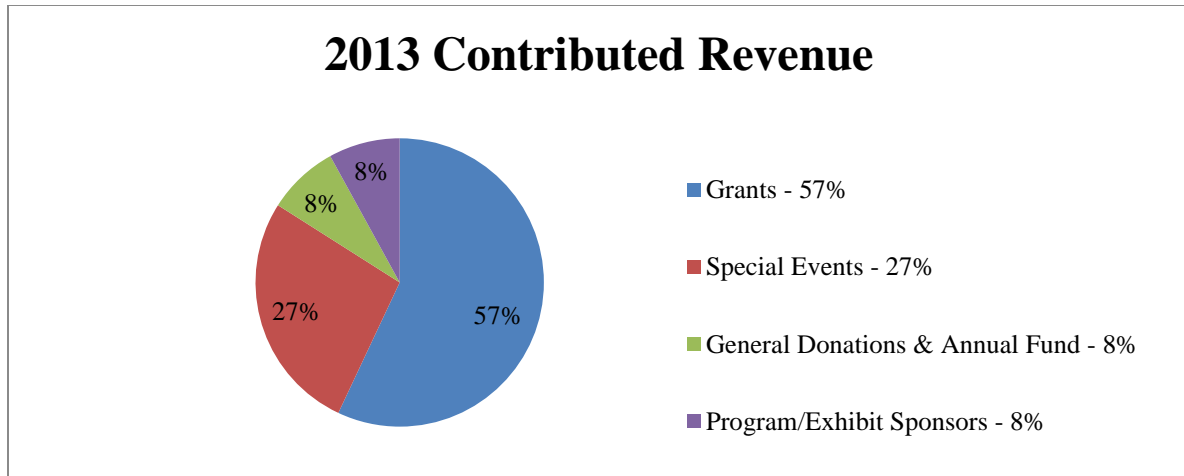
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<sup>28</sup> Louisiana Children's Museum Form 990, FY 2012, <http://www.guidestar.org/FinDocuments/2012/720/929/2012-720929068-09e8b85f-9.pdf>, Accessed September 6, 2014.

<sup>29</sup> Interview with LCM Development Director, September 30, 2014.

<sup>30</sup> Appendix E.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.



**Figure 2 – 2013 LCM Contributed Revenue**

As the focus of my internship and my current position at the Museum has been in special events, I will provide an overview of each special event, along with the various ticket levels, which bring in a large percentage of each fundraiser's revenue. Special events revenue is also earned from sponsorships, auction sales, raffles sales, and donations.

The four current fundraising events at the Museum include the following:

- *CHAIRish the Children* – This is the Museum's biggest fundraiser and signature adults-only event. After sixteen years, CHAIRish has developed a loyal following, who come to eat from over twenty local restaurants, sip specialty cocktails, and dance, while bidding on silent and live auctions and buying raffle tickets. The centerpiece of the event is the auctioning of whimsical chairs decorated by local artists.
  - Patron Ticket Level Tickets- Admission to the main event and the exclusive Patron Party from 7-8pm, which includes an exclusive auction gallery, signature cocktails, passed *hors d'oeuvres*, and a gift.
    - Booster Chair - \$1000 (8 tickets)
    - High Chair - \$600 (4 tickets)

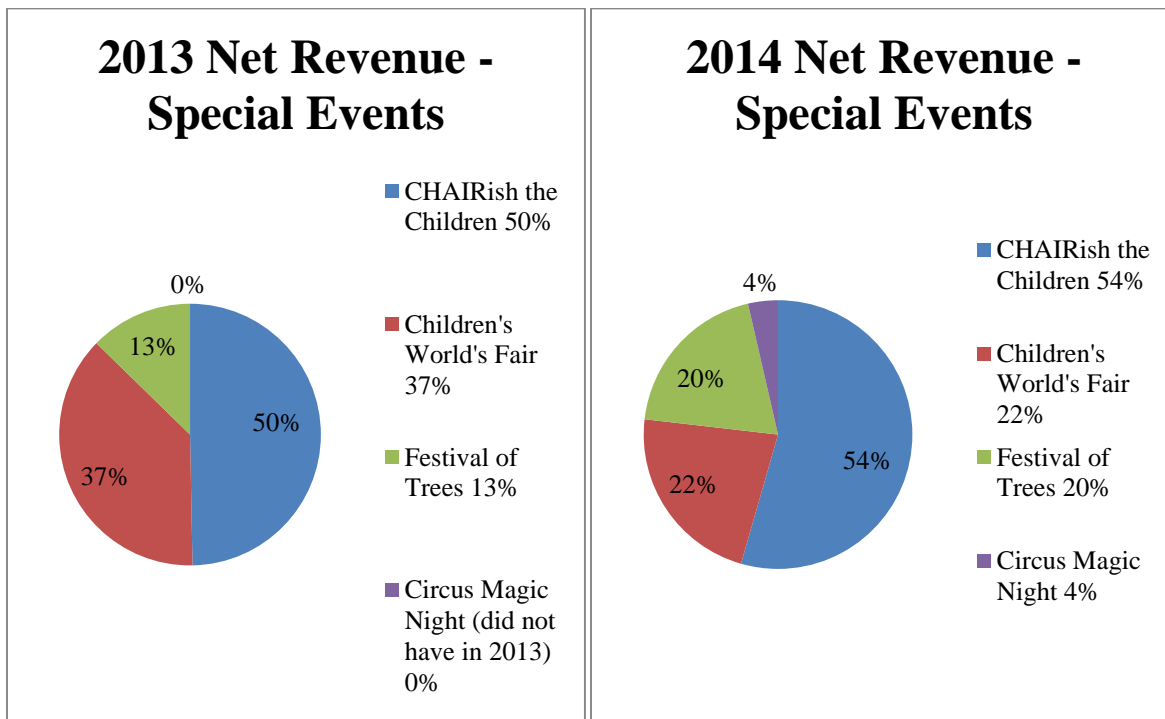
- Rockin' Chair - \$300 (2 tickets)
  - Steppin' Stool - \$250 (2 tickets, for patrons aged 21 to 29)
  - Bean Bag - \$150 (1 ticket)
- General Admission Tickets- Admission to the main event from 8-11pm.
  - Easy Chair (Non-Member) - \$75 (1 ticket)
  - Easy Chair (LCM Member) - \$50 (1 ticket)
- *Children's World's Fair* – LCM's signature fundraising event for families, which celebrated its sixteenth occurrence in March 2014. Founded in 1994, Children's World's Fair (CWF) was the first major fundraising event for the Museum. It took a five-year hiatus after Katrina and returned in 2010. This one-day "journey" takes children and their parents through eight countries all within the walls of the Museum. Each country is represented by a committee of volunteers who assemble a showcase of that country's culture, food, music, games, art, and more.
  - Early Explorer Patron Level Tickets- Early admission from 10am-4:30pm.
    - United Nations Delegate - \$2,500 (25 tickets)
    - Ambassador - \$1,000 (20 tickets)
    - Consular Corps - \$500 (15 tickets)
    - Foreign Service - \$250 (8 tickets)
    - Family Four-Pack - \$100 (4 tickets)
    - Individual - \$30 (1 ticket)
  - General Admission Tickets- Admission from 12-4:30pm.
    - Individual (Non-Member) - \$20 (1 ticket)
    - Individual (Member) - \$16 (1 ticket)

- *Festival of Trees Family Fun Day* – A relatively new event to the Museum, 2014 will bring the fourth annual Festival of Trees (FOT). For five weeks, the Museum is decorated with holiday trees created by local artists, businesses, and schools. While the whole festival is a month-long holiday celebration, the feature special event is Family Fun Day, where grandparents, parents, and children come together to celebrate time-honored holiday traditions, while making new memories.

In previous years, the Museum also hosted an Enchanted Premiere Party, which was an evening adult-centered event that kicked off FOT; however, due to its limited ticket sales, that event was struck from the calendar in 2014.

- Patron Level Tickets- Admission to the Patron Brunch from 10am to 12:30pm and then to the main event from 12:30-4:30pm, as well as the chance to mingle with Mr. Bingle and enjoy exclusive Patron Party holiday entertainment.
  - Individual - \$20 (1 ticket)
- General Admission Tickets- Admission to the main event from 12:30-4:30pm.
  - Individual (Non-Member) - \$15 (1 ticket)
  - Individual (Member) - \$12 (1 ticket)
- *Circus Magic Night* - LCM partners with Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey to sell 100-level seats to the circus at the Smoothie King Center. Before the circus starts, families enjoy a special pre-party of games, crafts, and activities, as well as a catered dinner and meet-and-greet with circus performers.

- Tickets- Admission to the exclusive LCM pre-party in the Capital One Lounge from 5-7pm and then to the circus from 7-9:30pm.
  - Family Four-Pack - \$140 (4 tickets)
  - Individual - \$40 (1 ticket)



**Figure 3 - 2013 Net Revenue, LCM Special Events**   **Figure 4 - 2014 Net Revenue, LCM Special Events**

Figures 3 and 4 show how much of the net revenue from each of these four fundraising events make up the total special events net revenue for FY 2013 and 2014.<sup>32</sup> The 2014 chart is based on actual numbers from all events except for the 2014 FOT Family Fun Day fundraiser. As that event does not take place until December 6, 2014, its percentage on the chart is based on the event's budgeted net revenue. These charts show how crucial the success of the Museum's biggest fundraiser, CHAIRish the Children, is, as its net revenue equals the total net revenue of all other special events combined.

<sup>32</sup> LCM Special Events Budget Spreadsheet, 2009-2014.



As of September 2014, both CHAIRish and CWF have brought in contributed revenue to the Museum for sixteen years (although not consecutive years for CWF). While this means that both events have had the same amount of time to gather a loyal audience, the differences in the purposes of the events significantly impacts their varying budgets. The primary goals of CHAIRish are (1) to raise money for the Museum and (2) to identify/cultivate prospects. The primary goals of CWF are (1) to raise money for the Museum and (2) to serve the Museum's mission by creating a one-of-a-kind educational experience for children and families in a unique learning environment. While both are primarily aimed at bringing in important unrestricted revenue, the second goal of the CWF controls many facets of the event that affects its revenue capacity. Since CWF is an event for families with young children, the Museum works to make it affordable (CWF Patron tickets - \$20, versus CHAIRish Patron tickets - \$150). Also, because CHAIRish is heavily focused on prospect identification and cultivation, it is essential that that event be more upscale to engage loyal major donors and new prospective donors alike. While elements of CHAIRish, such as a silent and live auction with over 130 packages, can bring in significant revenue, they would not work at an event like CWF because those elements do not appeal to the event's audience or fit in with the event's identity.

### Earned Revenue

Earned revenue represents the other 50-55% of the annual operating budget and comes from admission, memberships, store sales, rentals, birthday parties, group sales, and camps.<sup>33</sup> Figure 5 shows that the Museum logically relies heavily on admission and membership sales, which together make up almost 60% of LCM's total earned revenue. All five of the other sources added together only bring in a little over 40%. Therefore, it is critical for the Museum to provide

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<sup>33</sup> Appendix E.

quality, memorable experiences on a daily basis to sustain its income stream through membership renewals and return visits from non-members.

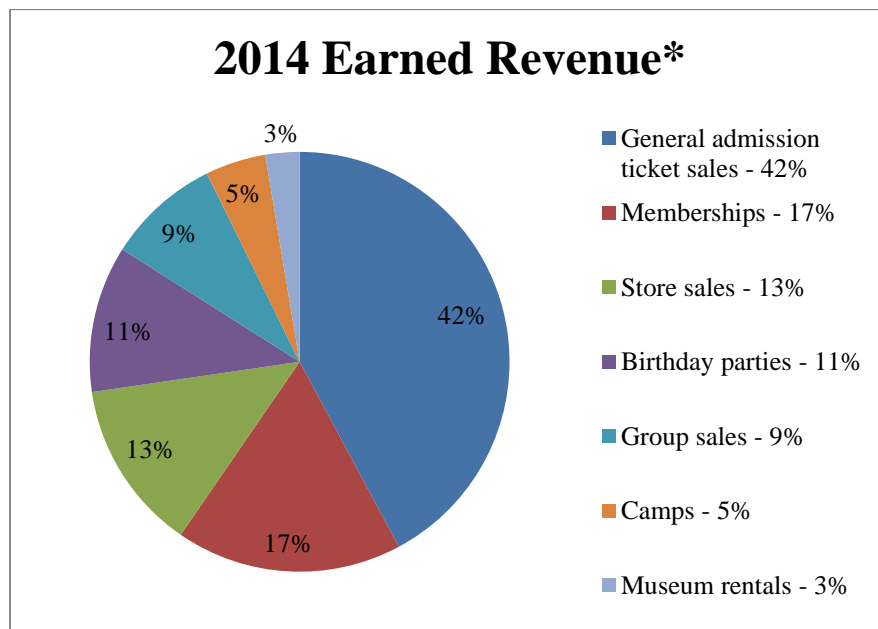


Figure 5 – 2014 LCM Earned Revenue (\*based on estimates as of September 2014)<sup>34</sup>

### E. Long-Range Vision

The best way to understand LCM’s long-term goals is to look to its vision statement:

The Louisiana Children’s Museum will be the regional leader in the field of early childhood education for children, families, and educators. On-site, off-site (outreach), and training programs will showcase the optimal, research-based learning on early childhood and play.<sup>35</sup>

A key strategy for the Museum to realize this vision is to expand its presence and mission within the Greater New Orleans community. That has been one of LCM’s primary goals since its inception, and the Museum has made strides to build LCM’s capacity throughout its history: first, with the building expansion in 1994; then, with the addition of educational outreach

<sup>34</sup> LCM Staff Meeting, “The Flow of the Dollar,” September 11, 2014.

<sup>35</sup> Appendix F.

programming in the 2000s; and now, with the campaign to move to City Park and build an Early Learning Village (ELV).

One way that ELV will help the Museum meet its vision to become a “regional leader in the field of early childhood education” is greater accessibility for families. While LCM’s current location in the Warehouse District places it near many hotels, galleries, and other museums, its target demographic—families with young children (primarily from the Greater New Orleans area)—are often discouraged from visiting the Museum regularly due to parking and safety concerns. My personal experience over eight months at LCM has revealed that the Museum’s current location is a barrier to building a healthy volunteer base, as many people do not want to deal with the inconvenience of traveling downtown. I have heard this sentiment from volunteers and visitors on several occasions: “I can’t wait till you guys move to City Park. Then, I’ll come to the Museum all the time!”

Also, while LCM currently welcomes around 120,000 visitors each year, City Park welcomes around 11 million.<sup>36</sup> Therefore, moving to City Park will give LCM a much wider reach among residents in the region and likely even among tourists. In addition, with ELV’s much larger indoor and outdoor space on eight acres (compared with LCM’s current indoor space of only 45,000 square feet), LCM will have a much greater capacity to serve its mission and vision.

To achieve the vision of building a successful ELV, LCM’s board, staff, and supporters must all work together. As CEO Bland explains in a September 2014 staff email:

While we all work on different things all day, it is the collective whole that makes the museum strong, and that will propel us to fulfill the vision of the Louisiana Children’s Museum in City Park, where we will all have incredible opportunities to

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<sup>36</sup> New Orleans Official Guide Website, “City Park,” <http://www.neworleansonline.com/directory/location.php?locationID=1340>, Accessed September 28, 2014.

expand on the wonderful work we do for children and families in our region.... We will continue to strengthen and shape our programs and operations such that when we move, we are prepared to slip our feet into our new bigger shoes.<sup>37</sup>

This long journey will be a challenging one for a small museum in a small city; however, once realized, the ELV will allow LCM to continue its work for the region's children and families with greater scope, aptitude, and longevity.

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<sup>37</sup> Bland, Julia, September 5, 2014, Email to LCM Staff.

## **Chapter 2: Description of the Internship**

In February 2014, I started my time at LCM as a development/special events intern who assisted and reported to both the development director and the special events coordinator. Since I was still enrolled full-time at UNO when I started, my LCM schedule from February to May was typically two to three days a week for six to seven hours a day. Two months into my internship, I learned that the special events coordinator was leaving her position. A few weeks later, I applied and interviewed for the job, and in early May, I was offered the special events coordinator position. My first day was May 19, 2014, and up to that point, I had completed 220 hours of my 480-hour internship. I started working forty to fifty hours weekly beginning on May 19, and I reached 480 hours in late June, after coordinating my first event, Circus Magic Night (CMN).

For the first three weeks of my internship, the major task assigned to me was grant research. I worked on updating the development director's extensive grant tracking spreadsheet with deadlines, key areas of support, contact information, LCM's prior history with the foundation, etc. Through this experience, I became more familiar with Guidestar and with reading 990s to learn about foundations and the types of organizations they fund. My contribution to the development office during this time was to aid the development director in her scheduling and prioritizing of grant applications and researching new grant prospects.

At about the four-week mark, my tasks became more special events-centered. With only four weeks until one of the Museum's largest fundraisers, the sixteenth Children's World's Fair (CWF), the special events coordinator relied on me as her right-hand assistant to prepare for the event. My responsibilities during this time ranged from menial tasks (creating buttons for staff members to wear promoting CWF and printing, cutting, and numbering complimentary tickets) to more substantial responsibilities like researching country facts to be included in the LCM

newsletters leading up to the event (see Figure 6) and serving as a liaison between the special events coordinator and committee members to ensure that committee members had everything they needed to set up their country space.

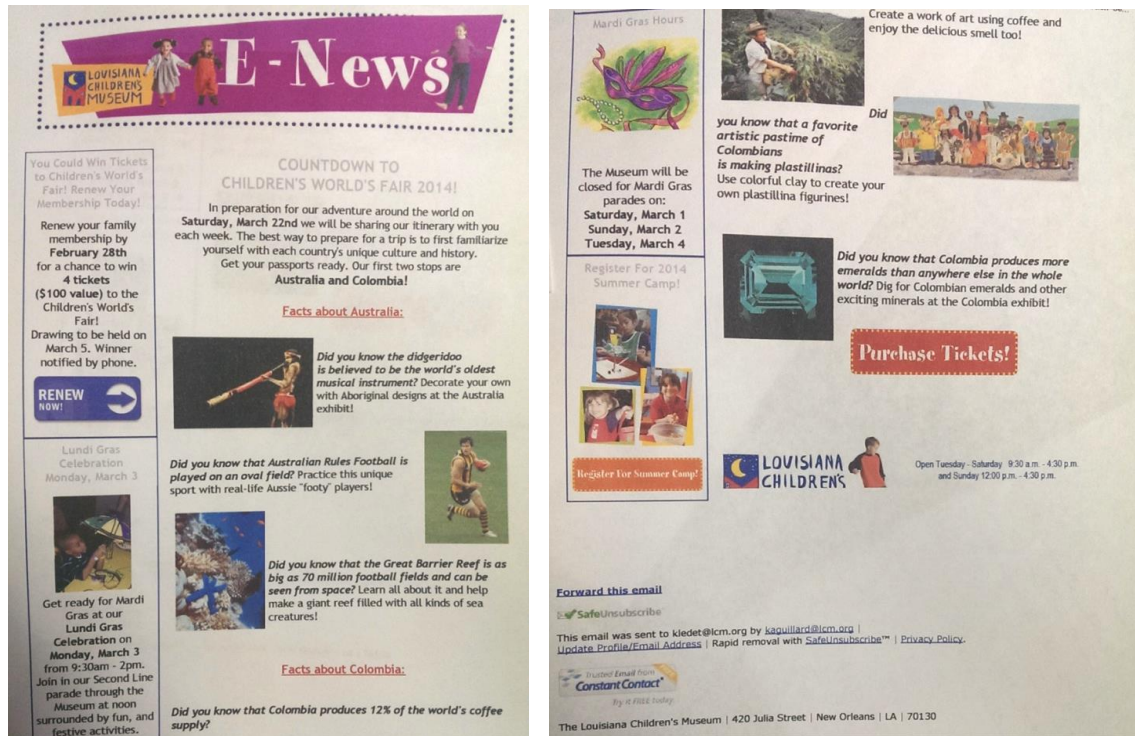


Figure 6 - LCM E-newsletter, February 19, 2014

One of my key contributions in these first months was the reorganization of the special events storage room. Since LCM's development office is a department of only two people, the storage room had become completely disorganized. A few weeks before CWF, when the special events coordinator asked me to start gathering supplies for the event from the storage room, I realized that organizing this space would increase the overall efficiency of preparing for events. It would decrease the likelihood of spending money on items the Museum had already purchased. Over two days, I organized and labeled everything in the storage room (see Figure 7).

I learned firsthand how effective this organization system would be as I helped set up for CWF. In the days leading up to that event, when the special events coordinator or a volunteer

asked me for duct tape or an extension cord or finger paint, it was easy for me or anyone to walk into the storage space, find the item, and quickly retrieve it. Finding supplies that would have taken several minutes before could now be found in seconds. Overall, this contribution made the set-up of eight different country exhibits go much more efficiently than it would have otherwise.



**Figure 7 - (L) Special events storage room before; (R) Special events storage room after**

During the week leading up to CWF, and particularly the two days before, I worked closely with the special events coordinator to prepare all the elements necessary for the event to run smoothly: organizing supplies and decorations for each country, printing signage, answering questions from committee members and staff, buying last minute supplies, communicating with volunteers, etc. On the day of event, I remember thinking how similar a special event is to a film set. Before I started my career as an arts administrator, I had worked in various aspects of film production, and I saw that coordinating a special event was in many ways analogous to running a film set. Some of the similarities I observed between the two include the following:

- Both require months of planning and preparation.
- Both involve large groups of people working on multiple tasks at the same time, who all come together for a short period of time.
- Both call for constant, careful communication.

Everything came together on the day of CWF, and as I drove home that evening, I remember thinking how special events have a rare opportunity. Special events can bring all of the fundamental aspects of nonprofit fundraising together when they successfully marry mission to community. A week after CWF, I wrote this in my intern journal: “Overall, the experience of CWF was exhausting but thoroughly rewarding. I really enjoyed helping manage all the moving parts of a fundraising event, and I can definitely see myself working in a position like this in the future.” Little did I know how soon that future would come.

Less than three weeks after CWF, the special events coordinator pulled me aside to let me know she was leaving her position in six weeks, and she thought that I should apply. Over the next month, as I helped the outgoing special events coordinator prepare for the upcoming CMN in June and CHAIRish in August, I applied and interviewed for the job. On May 1, 2014, the development director offered me the special events coordinator position, and I began my transition from intern into paid full-time staff member.

After finishing my final exams for the semester, I had one week to learn as much as possible from the special events coordinator before her last day on May 16. Since she was planning to travel to Europe and Asia immediately following her departure, I knew I would not be able to easily communicate with her as questions/situations popped up during my first few weeks. With two events approaching within the next three months (including the Museum’s biggest fundraiser), I knew I would have to devote all of my time and energy into this new endeavor. I had to learn quickly and gain confidence early on if I was going to execute these events successfully.

My first week was a blur. I immediately began scheduling meetings with the five CHAIRish committees (auction, chairs, restaurants, decorations, patron party); calling and



meeting with my contacts at the Smoothie King Center, Piccadilly, and FELD Entertainment for CMN; and discussing and researching potential CWF countries and dates for 2015. Early on, I realized how essential communication would be to organizing successful fundraisers. My inbox was flooded with a barrage of emails, and my phone was ringing constantly. To be effective at my job, I would need to be a master of multi-tasking and organization, but I would also need help.

Thus, two of my first priorities were to come up with organizational systems (for my office, computer, and each event), as well as to find one or two exemplary interns. With so much already needing to be in motion for both CMN and CHAIRish, it was challenging to find time to come up with organizational systems. However, I knew if I did not work on these now, it would make my job nearly impossible in a few weeks.

One organizational system I restructured was how to keep track of auction items and participating restaurants for CHAIRish. In previous years, committee chairs would periodically receive an email with an Excel spreadsheet from the special events coordinator that showed the status of each item. Coming into the job, I heard that this was not a very effective means of tracking items for either the committee or the special events coordinator. After some thought, I decided we should try working on Google Drive. Therefore, I created a Google Drive folder for each committee, which included a committee contact list; a document describing their responsibilities; and, for the auction, chair, and restaurant committees, a spreadsheet with all of the businesses we had mailed solicitation letters as well as an instruction sheet that explained how to use the spreadsheet on Google Drive (see Appendix G). The Google Drive folder allowed committee members to update the status of those donations and restaurants they had solicited, so that the rest of the committee and I could keep track of where we were with solicitations each

step of the way (see Figure 8). The Google Drive folder was effective because it allowed committee members to update the status of the donations in real time. As they received a confirmation, they highlighted the line in green; declines were highlighted in red; and those in limbo were yellow. We also had a line for delivery status, so I could let committee members know when I had received items at the Museum, and so that they could let me know when and who was picking up which items.

2014 Auction Committee x 2014 Auction List - Google x Take a screen capture (pr... x

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/12Tffg8mXkIRtnFmep6UBt7Yhg2px0mtUGIM73v/edit?gid=519273667

Apps Inbox - kriedet@gmail... Facebook Netflix Amazon.com: Prime... Wikipedia, the free... Dictionary and Thes... Out of Milk - To do IMDb - Movies, TV a...

2014 Auction List

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Comments Share

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	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	
1	Company	First Name	Last Name	Salutation	Address	City	State	Zip	Phone	Alt Phone	Email		Who is following up?	Confirm or Decline	Delivery Status	Donate year?
101	Dutel Traditional Homes	Thomas	Dutel	Thomas	P.O. Box 8653	Mandeville	LA	70470	504-333-6881				Anne Heavside			
102	EarthSavers			CHAIRish Friend	5501 Magazine St	New Orleans	LA	70115	504-899-8555				Anne Heavside	Confirm	Here at LCM-In Kathleen's office or conference room	Heal Ld Relax & Cleanse
103	EarthSavers Corporate Office	Karen Adjmi	and Jackie Palumbo	Karen and Jackie	614 N. Carrollton Ave.	New Orleans	LA	70119	504-899-8555 (504)				Anne Heavside	emailed Connie on 6/10		
104	Ecru			CHAIRish Friend	3933 Magazine St.	New Orleans	LA	70115	304-9475				Anne Heavside			
105	Ele Shoes & Accessories	Adele	Ralston	Adele	3316 Magazine St.	New Orleans	LA	70115	504-309-8674		elshoes@inocxmail.com		Anne Heavside	Left VM for Adele on 6/10		1 pair n Vince C booties
106	Elizabeth Favret Interiors	Elizabeth	Favret	Elizabeth	905 Nashville Avenue	New Orleans	LA	70115	504-250-6405		favret@cox.net		Anne Heavside	Confirmed	Here at LCM	
													Anne			

Auction Master Solicitation List Confirmed Auction Items (Under \$300) Confirmed Auction Items (Over \$300) Unknown Value (need to call to find out)

**Figure 8 - 2014 CHAIRish Auction Spreadsheet on Google Drive**

Another priority for me was to find interns that I could count on to handle major tasks. During my first few weeks, I interviewed one intern who could only come two days a week for about two to three hours at a time. I knew this would not be enough, so I asked our chief administrative officer and development director for help recruiting more interns. One week before CMN, two new interns came on board who could work four to five days a week for five to eight hours a day. These additions to the development office were absolutely crucial to the success of CMN and to the later success of CHAIRish. My first day working with both of these interns was the first day I fully enjoyed my job as the special events coordinator. Before that

time, the amount of work was overwhelming for one person, but with two people helping with the load and sharing their ideas, I was able to focus on the most critical aspects of these events and have my interns help with equally important, but time-consuming tasks, like prepping crafts and creating ticket packages.

In addition to showing LCM the benefits of having multiple interns at the same time, another related contribution I made was more deeply integrating the special events/development interns into our department. Since I had spent time on the other side as an intern, I knew how I could make the experience more beneficial for both the intern and the development office. My first action was to figure out a solution to the intern desk problem. The administrative offices have one intern desk space, which is on the opposite side of the office from the development director's and special events coordinator's offices. As an intern, I remembered feeling isolated at that desk, and I disliked having to walk over to the development director's or special events coordinator's office if I had a question because I felt like I was disturbing their work. My solution was two-fold: I cleared out space in my office to move in a small desk for one intern, and I cleared the opposite side of my own desk, so a second intern also had a place. By setting up the interns in the office with me, I made communication between us easier, and I was able to actively involve them in many more tasks than I would have otherwise.

On June 26, after five weeks on the job, I had to execute my first event. CMN, the smallest fundraising event at the Museum, provided a good opportunity to get my feet wet without the huge expectation of LCM's larger events. With sluggish ticket sales in the weeks leading up to the event, I worked closely with the marketing department to bring these numbers up. We had 350 seats to sell at the Smoothie King Center for Ringling Bros. and Barnum &

Bailey's Circus, and three weeks before the event, we had only sold about 15% of our seats. We came up with several strategies to boost these sales in that time:

- Ask our contact with FELD Entertainment (who manages the circus) for some promotional gifts that we could offer.
- Mail out a flyer to new LCM members and those who purchased CMN tickets over the last two years featuring the promotional offer (an \$11 circus program).
- Hand out these flyers to children attending LCM's summer camps over the next three weeks.
- Place a promotional circus program and related signage on display at the front desk of the Museum to encourage ticket sales among visitors.
- Email past and current special events committee members (from CWF and CHAIRish) about the promotional offer.
- Increase the number of dedicated e-blasts promoting CMN.

Each of these strategies helped bring in sales, and while we did not sell out, we did sell 91% of our seats, and brought in over \$6,000 for the Museum. Also, the families who attended had a wonderful night with their children, where they created fun circus crafts together and enjoyed each other's company (see Figure 9).

After CMN, several staff members complimented me for my calmness throughout the planning and execution of the event, which they said in turn made them calmer and able to enjoy the event more. In the time since my first 480 hours at the Museum, my calm demeanor has continued to be a recurring observation from my co-workers. Thus, while my organization methods have been key contributions to LCM, my biggest contribution so far has been to remain composed amidst the chaotic nature of planning and executing these events.



Figure 9 - Circus Magic Night Pictures, June 26, 2014

## Chapter 3: SWOT Analysis

The following is a SWOT analysis, based on my research, work experience, and studies in the arts administration program, as well as on the observations I made over my first 480 hours at LCM.

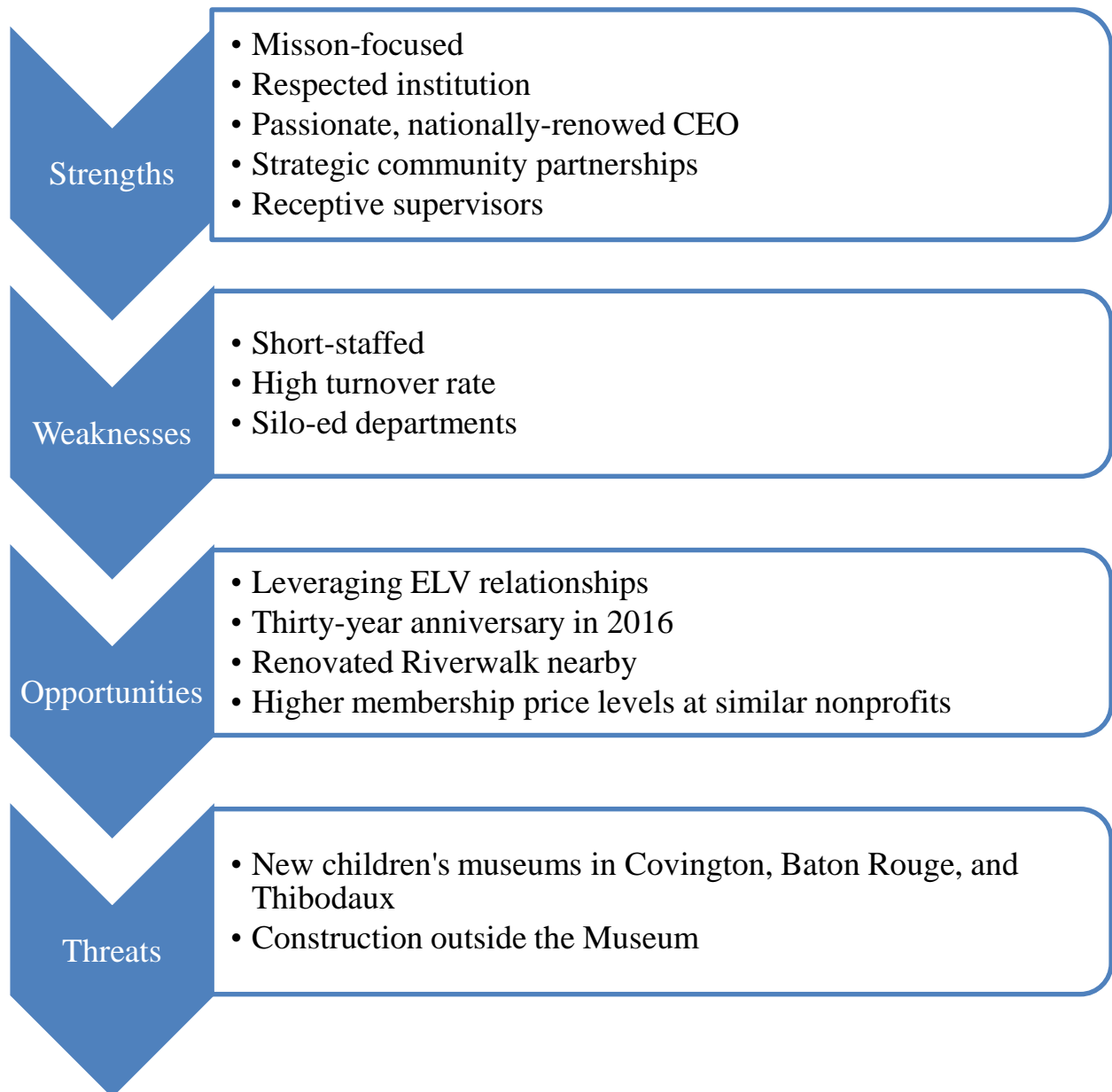


Figure 10 - LCM SWOT Chart

## **A. Strengths**

### **Mission-focused**

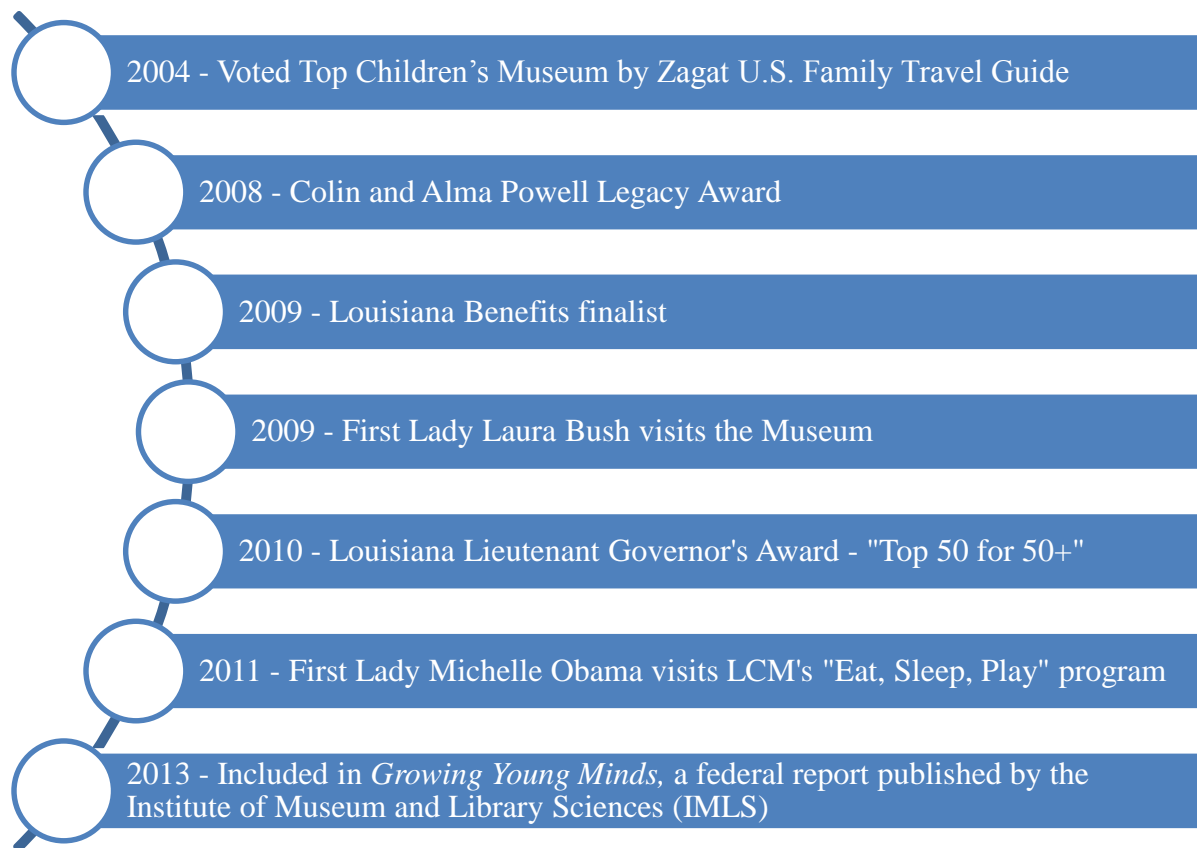
Over my time at LCM, I have observed a strong understanding of and desire to fulfill its mission from Museum staff. At Friday meetings, floor and administrative staff are encouraged to share their individual experiences from the past week. As I hear story after story, I am always struck by how many examples of the Museum's mission are taking place every minute of every day, both onsite and offsite. One example that I hear regularly is of exhibit facilitators encouraging and teaching parents how to play with their children. These staff members say that they regularly see parents who just look at their phones while their kids play. In some cases, these are disconnected, disinterested parents, but in other cases, floor staff say that some parents are uncomfortable engaging in play because they do not remember how. These are situations where floor staff can demonstrate and ease parents into play with their children. This is a prime example of staff living the mission of promoting "hands-on participatory learning" and facilitating for children "fruitful interaction with adults and their peers."

Another example of LCM living its mission is encompassed in its Play Power program. Play Power educators send postcards with work samples from the children they teach to the children's parents, so that these parents can be more aware and involved in the lessons their children are learning. Play Power also meets LCM's mission "to encourage discovery through observation, inquiry, creative construction, role-playing, problem-solving, and free play." An example of this is the "Flying to Freedom" lesson where children discuss what they would do if they could fly and what freedom means to them. One student responded, "One day I am gonna

own the White House because I will fly over it.”<sup>38</sup> These lessons evoke curiosity, creativity, inspiration, and enthusiasm for learning, which is what LCM’s mission is all about.

### Respected institution

With twenty-eight years of experience under its belt, LCM has grown and adapted to continue to serve its community, which has not only earned it the respect of generations of parents and children but also special commendation for its efforts over the years. The following timeline charts some of the ways LCM has been recognized for its work over the past decade:<sup>39</sup>



**Figure 11 – Timeline of LCM Awards and Recognition**

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<sup>38</sup> Appendix C.

<sup>39</sup> Appendix A.



Perhaps even greater than these accomplishments are the lasting memories that LCM has created for families. Several staff members, interns, and numerous volunteers that I have met while at LCM have shared their favorite memories at the Museum—from parents who remember taking their children to the Children’s World’s Fair in its first years to twenty-somethings who remember watching the Stuffer show, shopping at Winn Dixie, or delivering the weather report at the news studio. LCM administrative and floor staff both report that they often hear stories from adults about how the Museum shaped their childhood and guided them into the professions they pursued later in life.

One example of this would be my own professional journey. I visited the Museum often as a child, and I distinctly remember always wanting to spend my time in the WWL-news studio (see Figure 12). I became interested in what went into getting the news on television and out to the world. This interest, sparked at LCM, led me into ultimately deciding that my undergraduate major would be communications and film at the University of New Orleans. I interned at WDSU-news in 2006, and ultimately pursued a career in documentary filmmaking for over seven years. When deciding where to intern for this report, I thought about where I could see myself working, and the impact that LCM had on me as a child played a huge part in my decision to intern at the Museum. My story is just one of many that shows the respected reputation LCM has in its community—thanks in large part to the lasting impression it has made and continues to make on its visitors.



Figure 12 - Kathleen Ledet (age seven) behind camera at LCM's WWL-news studio, circa 1992

### Passionate, nationally-renowned CEO

Another major strength is the Museum's dedicated and esteemed CEO, Julia Bland. According to the Association of Small Foundation's report "What Makes an Effective Nonprofit," "Above all, nonprofits depend on one key resource to fulfill their missions: qualified, skilled, and talented board members, staff, and volunteers."<sup>40</sup> LCM's CEO definitely fits the bill as "qualified, skilled, and talented." She first served the Museum as a volunteer who helped create and chaired the first Children's World's Fair, then moved on to become a board member, and finally, she reached the position of CEO, where she has served for the past seventeen years.<sup>41</sup> Her prominence as a local leader was recognized in 2008, when she was admitted into the New

<sup>40</sup> Association of Small Foundations, "What Makes an Effective Nonprofit," 2010, <http://www.fidelitycharitable.org/docs/What-Makes-An-Effective-Nonprofit.pdf>, Accessed October 2, 2014.

<sup>41</sup> MacCash, Doug, "Bouncing Back: The Louisiana Children's Museum Reopens with a Free Celebration This Weekend and an Eye toward Helping Kids Cope with Post-K Living," *The Times-Picayune*, June 23, 2006, *NewsBank*, EBSCOhost, Accessed October 12, 2014.

Orleans City Business Hall of Fame.<sup>42</sup> Her national acclaim is proven from her five-year presidentially-appointed term on the National Museum and Library Board in Washington D.C. from 2008-2013, and her three-year service as President of the Association of Children’s Museums from 2010-2012.<sup>43</sup>

The CEO’s experience and reputation gives LCM a strong advantage toward its fundraising efforts. Donors at any level, as well as foundations and corporate sponsors, want to know that they can trust the organizations they give money to, and a respected, veteran CEO plays a big part in building and maintaining that necessary trust level. LCM’s CEO also brings a dedicated passion to her role at the Museum. She is usually the last person to leave the office, often well into the night, and she often spends her weekends working at the Museum as well. When she is not in the office, she is out meeting prospects and working relentlessly to make the Museum the best it can be. When she speaks about LCM, her passion is palpable and contagious. She inspires excitement in staff, volunteers, donors, prospects, and visitors of the Museum, and this in turn motivates them to inspire that same excitement about LCM to others.

#### Strategic community partnerships

LCM has many meaningful partnerships that have enabled it to more effectively reach a larger segment of the New Orleans community. As the National Resource Center’s guidebook, *Strengthening Nonprofits: A Capacity Builder’s Resource Library*, explains: “Through partnerships, [nonprofits] can contribute our small part and reap the benefits of everyone’s effort; we can accelerate learning and distribute skills and knowledge; and we can add depth and

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<sup>42</sup> CityBusiness, Staff, “CityBusiness names 10th class of Women of the Year honorees.” *New Orleans CityBusiness*, September 29, 2008, *Legal Collection*, EBSCOhost, Accessed October 12, 2014.

<sup>43</sup> Institute of Museum and Library Sciences, “IMLS-Campaign for Grade Level Reading Early Learning Task Force Participant Roster,” December 2010, Page 1, [http://www.imls.gov/assets/1/workflow\\_staging/AssetManager/3080.PDF](http://www.imls.gov/assets/1/workflow_staging/AssetManager/3080.PDF), Accessed October 12, 2014.

breadth to our community impact.”<sup>44</sup> LCM definitely fosters strong community partnerships. Perhaps its greatest examples are among schools in southeast Louisiana. Through outreach programs, field trips, and special events, LCM has established lasting relationships with regional public, private, and parochial schools as well as with educational facilities, like Head Start Centers and the New Orleans Public Library.<sup>45</sup> These vitally important relationships are mutually beneficial. For LCM, the partnership makes them more accessible to their target audience of the region’s children and their parents. For schools, the partnership gives them educational support and resources they might not have access to otherwise.

Beyond schools, LCM has many other community partners. As mentioned in the previous “Programs” section, LCM’s longest-lasting educational partnership has been eleven years with the Tulane Institute for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health. Other partnerships that allow the Museum to provide a wide range of programs include WYES, the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities, the New Orleans Geological Society, the Louisiana Society of CPAs, and more. In 2006, LCM co-founded the New Orleans Kids Partnership, which now boasts a thirty-member organization that works together to advance the health of children in New Orleans public schools.<sup>46</sup> LCM has also founded partnerships with cultural groups in the region, thanks to its Children’s World’s Fair. Over the years, dozens and dozens of countries and regions have been highlighted in the fair, and these nations are usually represented by cultural groups, like the New Orleans Italian American Cultural Center and the New Orleans Hispanic Heritage Foundation. With sixteen events held over a twenty-year period, CWF has allowed LCM to reach a more

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<sup>44</sup> National Resource Center, “Partnerships: Frameworks for Working Together,” *Strengthening Nonprofits: A Capacity Builder’s Resource Library*, 2002-10, <http://strengtheningnonprofits.org/resources/guidebooks/Partnerships.pdf>, Accessed October 1, 2014.

<sup>45</sup> Interview with LCM Development Director, September 30, 2014.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

diverse demographic, and the key to that has been the careful building of long-term partnerships with cultural organizations in the region.

### Receptive supervisors

Another strength I have observed firsthand at LCM is that supervisors are both interested in and open to new ideas and approaches. This is an essential trait of good supervisors in both the profit and nonprofit world.<sup>47</sup> At meetings with my direct supervisor and other higher-level management, I always feel encouraged to share my thoughts and suggestions, which I believe is an excellent management approach. The more open the leadership is to listening to fresh perspectives, the more ownership staff will take over their jobs and responsibilities to help LCM achieve its mission. This policy also helps to ensure that LCM's methods and strategies do not become stagnate and ineffective.

In my first month as a paid employee, I made many suggestions to my supervisors, and all were heard and respected. For example, at a meeting in June to discuss the upcoming Festival of Trees, I suggested that we promote a "dress-up" component for each weekend of the festival to boost attendance, and I pitched a few ideas for what each weekend's attire could be. My idea was met with enthusiasm and encouragement to share more ideas; it was also approved to be part of this year's festivities. This is just one of many examples I could give of the positive, collaborative feedback I have received from LCM's leadership as an intern and a new employee.

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<sup>47</sup> Jane, Mary, "Definition of a Good Supervisor," *The Houston Chronicle*, <http://smallbusiness.chron.com/definition-good-employee-supervisor-21463.html>, Accessed October 2, 2014.

## **B. Weaknesses**

### Short-staffed

Like most nonprofits today with “limited budgets, stretched resources, and overworked staff,”<sup>48</sup> LCM is faced with the challenge of how to achieve its huge, laudable goals with so few full-time paid team members. I have observed that many staff members must do the jobs that two or three people would do in organizations with larger operating budgets. For example, the deputy director, who assists the CEO with the day-to-day affairs of running the Museum, also supervises the business office, the chief administrative officer, the Museum store, and the maintenance department, while simultaneously serving as the marketing director and supervising the two marketing and sales coordinators. The education programming coordinator is solely responsible for planning and executing all of the weekday and weekend educational programs at the Museum, in addition to the events put on by the education department, such as Farm Week, Supersaurus Saturday, and New Year’s Eve Countdown to Noon, to name a few.

As a member of the two-person development office, I can say there are often weeks when the size of our department negatively impacts our ability to do the best work we can to fundraise and cultivate relationships. In the weeks leading up to Circus Magic Night and CHAIRish the Children, the development director and I were inundated with prep work that often prevented us from having time to do our best strategic planning for ways to ensure these fundraisers brought in the most funds possible. LCM’s development office brings in nearly half of the Museum’s revenue annually, which is a significant responsibility to place largely on two staff members. As the 2013 report *UnderDeveloped: A National Study of Challenges Facing Nonprofit Fundraising*

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<sup>48</sup> Nonprofit HR Solutions, *2013 Nonprofit Employment Trends Survey*, prepared with assistance from The Improve Group, <http://www.nonprofithr.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/2013-Employment-Trends-Survey-Report.pdf>, Accessed October 2, 2014.

details, development offices, especially those of small to mid-size nonprofits, are often overworked and stifled. One key statistic from this report that stood out to me helps to explain why development offices across the country are so strained: 41% of nonprofits surveyed reported having *no* culture of philanthropy (where every staff and board member is actively involved in supporting the organization’s fundraising efforts). Only 12% of development directors in the survey “strongly agreed” that they had a strong culture of philanthropy.<sup>49</sup> While LCM has elements of a culture of philanthropy, staff members could be more invested and educated in the importance of fundraising to the Museum’s sustainability and growth. Also, instead of hiring more development staff and thus increasing development expenses, other LCM staff could contribute more by filling in as needed to assure fundraising success.

### High turnover rate

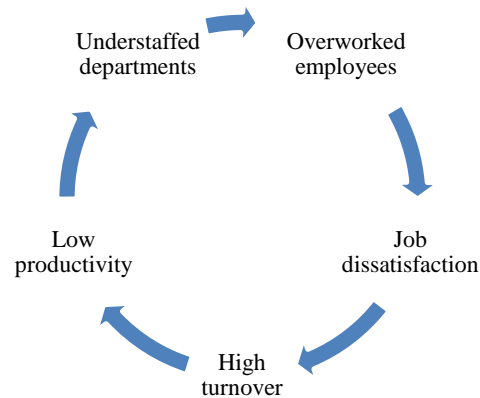
Over my first 480 hours at LCM spanning five months, six full-time staff members, 26% of full-time staff, left their positions. I learned that in the seven months preceding my internship, there was turnover in six more full-time staff positions, bringing the total full-time staff turnover rate over a one-year period to 52%. This is well above the average of 17% in nonprofits surveyed by Nonprofit HR Solutions in 2012.<sup>50</sup> These rapid changes in staff can negatively affect nonprofits in the following ways:

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<sup>49</sup> Bell, Jeanne and Marla Cornelius, *UnderDeveloped: A National Study of Challenges Facing Nonprofit Fundraising*, [http://www.compasspoint.org/sites/default/files/images/UnderDeveloped\\_CompassPoint\\_HaasJrFund\\_January%202013.pdf](http://www.compasspoint.org/sites/default/files/images/UnderDeveloped_CompassPoint_HaasJrFund_January%202013.pdf), Accessed October 1, 2014.

<sup>50</sup> Nonprofit HR Solutions, *2013 Nonprofit Employment Trends Survey*, prepared with assistance from The Improve Group, <http://www.nonprofithr.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/2013-Employment-Trends-Survey-Report.pdf>, Accessed October 2, 2014.

- *Decrease in productivity* – High turnover rates result in recurring gaps of time where other already overworked employees have to take over for staff who have left, which can lead to a domino effect of losing more and more employees (See Figure 13).



**Figure 13 - Inefficiency Cycle**

- *Instability of organization* – The more employees an organization loses on a regular basis, the more unpredictable that organization’s future becomes. A consistent guiding force, which can only come with consistent leadership over a sustained period of time, is crucial to the success of many departments within a nonprofit. With frequent turnover, the nonprofit must continually start over and attempt to build skills and knowledge among its staff that can only come after years of working a position.
- *Low office morale* – While some workers may be relatively content in their jobs, as they see more and more people leaving around them, it can cause them to question the organization themselves, which can be another force causing the continued cycle. An office of disgruntled workers who are just waiting to quit is also not an ideal environment



in a sector that requires passionate staff who believe in what the organization represents.<sup>51</sup>

### Silo-ed departments

Like the previous two weaknesses, LCM is not alone in the nonprofit sector to have silo-ed departments. As Peter Campbell explains in his article, “The Silo Situation,” “When the silo acts in an environment where [one department’s] decisions impact others, they can create long-lived problems and rifts in critical relationships.”<sup>52</sup> While working independently within a department can sometimes seem like the quickest way to get the job done efficiently, it stymies an essential element of a successful nonprofit—collaboration. While there is definitely successful collaboration at LCM, I think this is an area where the Museum could be stronger, particularly if each department looked past the strict boundaries of what responsibilities fall into the marketing department versus what falls into the development department or education department. Because cross-departmental coordination does happen at LCM, and when I observe it to great effect, I think if this practice were more of an institutional policy, particularly in situations where more than one department needs to share in the ownership of a project, the results would make the organization much stronger.

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<sup>51</sup> Armstrong, Liz; Bluit-Fisher, Jocelyn; Lopez-Newman, Lori; Paul, Diana R.; and Paul, Keith R., “Nonprofits in Crisis: How to Retain Employees in the Nonprofit Sector” (2009), UNLV Theses/Dissertations/Professional Papers/Capstones, Paper 810, <http://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1811&context=thesesdissertations>, Accessed October 3, 2014.

<sup>52</sup> Campbell, Peter, “The Silo Situation,” *IdealWare: Helping Nonprofits Make Smart Software Decisions*, May 11, 2009, <http://www.idealware.org/blog/2009/05/silo-situation.html>, Accessed October 3, 2014.

## **E. Opportunities**

### Leveraging Early Learning Village relationships

LCM has a unique opportunity with its ELV campaign to excite and capture a new audience. ELV is an impressive, intriguing project that appeals to many leaders in the public, private, and social sectors. Thus, if LCM can leverage its existing and developing relationships that have been initiated through ELV, the Museum's donor base would be strengthened. New donor acquisitions can be difficult for a nonprofit that does not appear to be growing or innovating. ELV shows that LCM plans to be at the forefront of educational services for families and children in the region, and that fact can be a powerful tool used to stir up interest in supporting LCM now.

### Thirty-year anniversary in 2016

In about two years, LCM will reach its thirtieth anniversary. It is common for nonprofits to use milestone anniversaries to boost interest in the organization among the media and its donor base. Fundraising consultant Lynne T. Dean says that nonprofits should take advantage of the increased attention that comes with anniversaries and “consider leveraging this amplified exposure into a successful funding initiative that will address [their] strategic plans for the future.”<sup>53</sup> Accordingly, LCM will have a particularly opportune window in 2016 to use its thirtieth anniversary to promote its ELV capital campaign to the public.

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<sup>53</sup> Dean, Lynne T. “Anniversaries and Capital Campaigns: A Winning Combination,” Custom Development Solutions, [http://www.cdsfunds.com/anniversaries\\_and\\_capital\\_campaigns\\_a\\_winning\\_combination.html](http://www.cdsfunds.com/anniversaries_and_capital_campaigns_a_winning_combination.html), Accessed October 4, 2014.

### Renovated River Walk nearby

In May 2014, the \$82 million renovation of the New Orleans River Walk reopened in an effort to bring more tourists and locals to the downtown area. LCM, located just six blocks from the River Walk, has an opportunity to market itself to tourists and locals now attracted to the area to visit the new shopping mall. As David Bilbe, general manager of the Loews Hotel and current president of the Greater New Orleans Hotel and Lodging Association, explains, “There’s always opportunities, whenever any new business moves into a market, to capture business from those organizations.... We all think it’s great for downtown and great for the convention district.”<sup>54</sup> The greatest potential for increased admissions to LCM will likely come from out-of-state tourists and regional visitors who live outside of the New Orleans metro area and are visiting the city’s downtown area for a day or two to enjoy activities that they can do within walking distance of each other. This new outlet mall may also bring more New Orleanians to that part of town, as the next closest outlet mall is sixty miles away in Gonzales, Louisiana.

### Higher membership price levels at similar nonprofits

As membership price levels at similar nonprofit organizations in the region are higher than LCM’s, the Museum has the opportunity to increase its own membership prices to be more in line with its competitors. For example, LCM’s most popular membership level (“Family II” – which grants five people access to the Museum for one year) is \$65.<sup>55</sup> The Mississippi Children’s Museum’s base level membership (“Level 1” – which grants three people access to the Museum

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<sup>54</sup> Waller, Mark, “New Orleans Tourism Industry Cheers the Return of the Riverwalk Mall,” *The Times-Picayune*, May 21, 2014, [http://www.nola.com/business/index.ssf/2014/05/new\\_orleans\\_tourism\\_industry\\_c.html](http://www.nola.com/business/index.ssf/2014/05/new_orleans_tourism_industry_c.html), Accessed October 4, 2014.

<sup>55</sup> LCM Website, “Levels of Membership,” <http://lcm.org/come-play/membership-levels/>.

for one year) is \$75.<sup>56</sup> That is \$10 more for granting two less people access than LCM's "Family II" level. Even the membership prices at the Bayou Country Children's Museum in Thibodaux, which opened less than two years ago, are higher than LCM's ("Us level" – which grants four people access to the Museum for one year for \$100).<sup>57</sup> The higher prices at other organizations give LCM the chance to increase its own prices and face less negative feedback from new and renewing members than it would otherwise.

#### **D. Threats**

##### New children's museums in Covington, Baton Rouge, and Thibodaux

When LCM first opened in 1986, it was the only children's museum in the state. Within ten years, children's museums started popping up across Louisiana in Shreveport, Lafayette, and Lake Charles. Now, twenty-eight years later, LCM faces more direct competition from three new children's museums all within eighty miles of LCM. The Bayou Country Children's Museum opened in Thibodaux a year ago and provides residents of Lafourche Parish with its first children's museum, a much closer option for these Louisianans than LCM.<sup>58</sup>

While opening dates have not been set in Covington and Baton Rouge, these new museums could affect LCM's admission rates in the coming years. They could also force LCM to be more competitive in its efforts to attract new and renewing members; to secure sponsors for exhibits, programs, and events; and to acquire funding from local foundations and donors.

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<sup>56</sup> Mississippi Children's Museum Website, "Become a Member," <http://www.mississippichildrensmuseum.com/supportus/become-member/>, Accessed October 2, 2014.

<sup>57</sup> Bayou Country Children's Museum Website, "Membership," <http://www.bayoucountrychildrensmuseum.org/membership/>, Accessed October 2, 2014.

<sup>58</sup> Dunn, Sydni, "Children's Museum Grand Opening Saturday in Thibodaux," *Daily Comet*, September 27, 2013, <http://www.dailycomet.com/article/20130927/ARTICLES/130929509>, Accessed October 4, 2014.

### Construction outside the Museum

For over a year now, heavy construction, including the resurfacing of Julia Street from Convention Center Boulevard to Loyola Avenue, has made driving to and parking near LCM a serious challenge. Started in August of 2013,<sup>59</sup> this construction project was originally planned to be complete in the late winter of 2013; however, it has continued well into 2014. While the resurfacing of Julia is now largely finished, many of the streets surrounding the Museum are still undergoing construction and make it difficult to park near the Museum. At an LCM staff meeting discussing revenues streams, LCM leadership attributed the ongoing construction to lower admission sales this year than the prior fiscal year.<sup>60</sup> With no certainty about when this construction will finally be complete, the Museum's critical earned revenue from admissions continues to be threatened.

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<sup>59</sup> City of New Orleans Department of Public Works, "Downtown Improvement Project Fact Sheet," August 15, 2014, [http://downtownnola.com/uploads/DIIP\\_FQ\\_Fact\\_Sheet\\_Aug\\_15\\_2013-1376674484.pdf](http://downtownnola.com/uploads/DIIP_FQ_Fact_Sheet_Aug_15_2013-1376674484.pdf), Accessed October 3, 2014.

<sup>60</sup> LCM Staff Meeting, "The Flow of the Dollar," September 11, 2014.

## Chapter 4: Best Practices

The three best practices I will focus on are interrelated, and all are fundamental to a healthy nonprofit organization. Since my internship was in a development office, the best practices I describe are primarily strategies for successful fundraising. However, they are also policies and procedures that could apply to management systems and organizational philosophies. Also, with so many development strategies in the nonprofit sector, I will narrow my focus on special events by looking through the lens of my internship at LCM and determining what research was most applicable to my experience, observations, and analysis of the Museum. Finally, I will detail the ways in which these best practices are implemented by the Louisiana Art and Science Museum (LASM), based on the information I learned from an interview with LASM's assistant director of development. I chose LASM because it is comparable to LCM in the following ways:

- *Operating budgets are in the same range.* – In 2012, LASM's was \$2,504,413<sup>61</sup> and LCM's was \$1,589,969.
- *Both museums are located in southeast Louisiana.* – They are only eighty miles apart, about a ninety-minute drive.
- *Target demographics are similar.* – The primary audience of both museums is families from the region.
- *Development office size is the same.* – Both have development offices of two full-time staff members.

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<sup>61</sup> LASM Form 990, FY 2012, <http://www.guidestar.org/organizations/72-0542138/louisiana-art-science-museum.aspx>, Accessed October 15, 2014.

## A. Develop a culture of philanthropy

Throughout my studies in the arts administration program, and particularly during my practicum at the Greater New Orleans Foundation where I attended workshops like Fundraising 101 and 102, the most fundamental lesson I learned was that the key to successful fundraising is collective effort by all involved in the organization. One person, in the form of a development director, should not be the sole person responsible for bringing in contributed revenue, if the nonprofit is to sustain itself. A “culture of philanthropy” must be developed where “most people in the organization (across positions) act as ambassadors and engage in relationship building” and where “everyone promotes philanthropy and can articulate a case for giving.”<sup>62</sup> This strategic understanding of fund development is supported by research from groups like CompassPoint. In their *UnderDeveloped* study, CompassPoint revealed just how much many development offices are struggling from solitary fundraising systems. The report makes the case that nonprofits with a true culture of philanthropy are much more likely to be high performing organizations than others. In a survey of 2,700 executive directors and development directors, 59% of respondents at high performing organizations “strongly agreed” that they have a culture of philanthropy already in place, versus just 33% at organizations not categorized as high performing.<sup>63</sup>

Achieving a culture of philanthropy does not happen overnight. It starts with the adoption of a new organizational culture where everyone must be educated on what fundraising entails and what everyone’s individual role is, which can vary from more direct fundraising, such as

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<sup>62</sup> Bell, Jeanne and Marla Cornelius, *UnderDeveloped: A National Study of Challenges Facing Nonprofit Fundraising*, [http://www.compasspoint.org/sites/default/files/images/UnderDeveloped\\_CompassPoint\\_HaasJrFund\\_January%202013.pdf](http://www.compasspoint.org/sites/default/files/images/UnderDeveloped_CompassPoint_HaasJrFund_January%202013.pdf), Accessed October 1, 2014.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

building relationships and making asks on behalf of the nonprofit, to more subtle efforts, such as being aware of how your role at the organization plays a part in the overall fundraising success. As Karen Osborne of The Osborne Group explains, “Creating a culture of philanthropy and stewardship is not about creating an organization of solicitors—but rather creating a group of people who believe in the power of philanthropy and the organization’s mission, and who embrace their role in that work.”<sup>64</sup> The fundraising professionals who promote the efficacy of this organizational culture say it starts with a shift in mindset. Staff and board cannot view the most basic aspect of fundraising—asking people for money—as obnoxious or aggressive. They must serve as “ambassadors”<sup>65</sup> of their organization both in the office and within their communities. In the office setting, this means staff taking that extra time to make sure the materials sent to a development director for a grant proposal are truly the best quality writing and research that person can provide and are not viewed as just another task to check off a to-do list for the day. Outside the office, this means staff asking a favorite restaurant to donate a gift certificate to the organization’s silent auction. To create a high-performing culture of philanthropy, CompassPoint also recommends that nonprofits practice the following:

- Recruit talented, experienced development professionals that can form a “mature, professionally run”<sup>66</sup> development office with stable leadership.
- Take full advantage of the connection that can be developed with your supporters and your staff through social media and online fundraising.

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<sup>64</sup> Association of Fundraising Professionals, “Building a Culture of Philanthropy,” February 1, 2011, <http://www.afpnet.org/ResourceCenter/ArticleDetail.cfm?ItemNumber=4858>, Accessed October 4, 2014.

<sup>65</sup> Bell, Jeanne and Marla Cornelius, *UnderDeveloped: A National Study of Challenges Facing Nonprofit Fundraising*, [http://www.compasspoint.org/sites/default/files/images/UnderDeveloped\\_CompassPoint\\_HaasJrFund\\_January%202013.pdf](http://www.compasspoint.org/sites/default/files/images/UnderDeveloped_CompassPoint_HaasJrFund_January%202013.pdf), Accessed October 1, 2014.

<sup>66</sup> Sargeant, Adrian, and Jen Shang, *Fundraising Principles and Practice*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2010, Page 205.



- Treat a development director transition with as much care as an executive director transition.<sup>67</sup>

This final point is critical as so many development offices face what Jeanne Bell and Marla Cornelius describe as a “vicious cycle that threatens their ability to raise the resources they need to succeed.”<sup>68</sup> That cycle is the “revolving door” of development professionals moving in and out of nonprofit offices and even moving in and out of the field entirely. As the report explains:

The lack of a favorable climate for fundraising leads to premature development director departures. These departures, in turn, disrupt the relationship building that is key to individual donor cultivation, and prevent organizations from developing and sustaining the conditions for development success.<sup>69</sup>

LASM had a consistent director of development for twelve years before she retired three years ago. Since then, LASM has had the same director of development and the same assistant director of development. The current assistant director of development attests to the value of consistent leadership in fundraising over time saying that it made her transition to the Museum as well as the director of development’s transition smooth. In our interview, she also pointed out the importance of building trust and a “team relationship” within a development office, which can only come with regular communication and time. For example, she explained that it took the current director of development and herself a full year to learn each other’s communication style

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<sup>67</sup> Bell, Jeanne and Marla Cornelius, *UnderDeveloped: A National Study of Challenges Facing Nonprofit Fundraising*, [http://www.compasspoint.org/sites/default/files/images/UnderDeveloped\\_CompassPoint\\_HaasJrFund\\_January%202013.pdf](http://www.compasspoint.org/sites/default/files/images/UnderDeveloped_CompassPoint_HaasJrFund_January%202013.pdf), Accessed October 1, 2014.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

and develop the rapport that is necessary when creating and implementing successful fundraising strategies that will succeed for years, not months.<sup>70</sup>

Finally, to achieve a fully integrated culture of philanthropy, board members must also embrace fundraising behaviors until they become innate. CompassPoint suggests that nonprofits change the way they train boards and focus on what fundraising actions and activities they should be involved with and how they can do their part to create an “effective partnership” with their executive director and development director.<sup>71</sup> In a fully realized culture of philanthropy, all board members are making monetary donations within their means, fostering relationships that support the organization, participating in fundraising events, and regularly thinking about in what ways, small and large, they can ensure that their organization not only sustains itself but thrives for many years to come.<sup>72</sup> As the text *Fundraising Principles and Practice* states, “there are no free riders in the sphere of moral excellence,”<sup>73</sup> and, thus, it is not enough to simply believe in the mission, all who work for the organization—the board, the staff, and the volunteers—must be equally invested in living the mission.

## **B. Promote cross-departmental collaboration**

The organizational connectedness grown from a culture of philanthropy will also help facilitate the best practice of habitual collaboration between departments in nonprofit organizations. Drs. Kevin and Jackie Freiberg, who led the San Diego Consulting Group in

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<sup>70</sup> Interview with LASM Assistant Director of Development, October 15, 2014.

<sup>71</sup> Bell, Jeanne and Marla Cornelius, *UnderDeveloped: A National Study of Challenges Facing Nonprofit Fundraising*, [http://www.compasspoint.org/sites/default/files/images/UnderDeveloped\\_CompassPoint\\_HaasJrFundJanuary%202013.pdf](http://www.compasspoint.org/sites/default/files/images/UnderDeveloped_CompassPoint_HaasJrFundJanuary%202013.pdf), Accessed October 1, 2014.

<sup>72</sup> Joyaux, Simone, “Building a Culture of Philanthropy in Your Organization,” <http://www.simonejoyaux.com/downloads/CultureOfPhilanthropy.pdf>, Accessed October 4, 2014.

<sup>73</sup> Sargeant, Adrian, and Jen Shang, *Fundraising Principles and Practice*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2010, Page 593.

training business leaders on effective management strategies, say that before cross-departmental collaboration can be reached leadership must determine why departmental silos exist. Once the factors and personalities that are playing into these silos are revealed, the organization can begin its work to overcome them. Through this process, the Freibergs advise that all staff “never burn a bridge”<sup>74</sup> by disparaging other departments for any road blocks they may have caused in the past. Staff should focus on the positive, effective communication and collaboration that is already happening (even if in small doses) and build upon that.

Then, leadership must deliver a “clear, compelling, and urgent cause”<sup>75</sup> that presents cross-departmental collaboration not as an option, but as a necessity. Staff should also be encouraged to discuss the challenges they are facing, so that everyone can understand what their co-workers’ jobs entail. With this understanding should also come an increased awareness of how each department’s work affects other departments, which should promote better teamwork. Other practices the Freibergs suggest promoting include the following:

- Regular meetings between department heads
- Opportunities for staff to socialize outside of the office
- Acknowledgement of successful collaboration<sup>76</sup>

Making these simple steps part of an organization’s routine behavior can have dramatic results on productivity and staff morale. When people feel supported and connected to others through their work, they are more likely to want to continue doing it than if they feel isolated and

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<sup>74</sup> Freiberg, Dr. Kevin, and Dr. Jackie Freiberg, “17 Strategies for Improving Collaboration,” <http://www.freibergs.com/resources/articles/accountability/17-strategies-for-improving-collaboration/>, Accessed October 5, 2014.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

overwhelmed. For example, at LASM, staff feel comfortable asking questions or sharing ideas with each other every day. The assistant director of development attested to the “we’re all in this together” mindset at LASM that is born from the “open door” policy they have among all staff. At LASM, co-workers are welcome to pop into each other’s offices regularly because they trust each other’s opinions and value each other’s time.<sup>77</sup>

Since my area of focus for the internship was special events, I researched best practices for collaboration in nonprofit fundraising events. In Blackbaud’s *Best Practices for Fundraising Success: Diversifying Giving Channels*, Susan Ulrich McLaughlin (CFRE), principal consultant for Blackbaud, states:

A special event should not be owned by one person, but should engage many people including the nonprofit’s CEO, CDO, major gift officers, prospect researchers, volunteers, and board members. Collaboration is critical to maximizing the value of your event.<sup>78</sup>

Ulrich McLaughlin recommends having an initial event planning meeting, where staff and other key stakeholders are present. A kick-off meeting helps staff understand their responsibilities and get excited and engaged from the get-go. This strategy will also result in staff taking more ownership of their role in the success of the special event.<sup>79</sup> This is an effective best practice strategy I have witnessed firsthand at LCM. While we do not currently have a kick-off meeting for staff before special events, a few weeks before CHAIRish, the development director and I also hosted a staff training on the new auction website and an additional event preparation walk-through around the Museum with staff. Both resulted in a prepared and engaged staff on

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<sup>77</sup> Interview with LASM Assistant Director of Development, October 15, 2014.

<sup>78</sup> Ulrich McLaughlin, Susan, “Analyzing the Value of Special Events: Strategies for Success,” *Best Practices for Fundraising Success: Diversifying Giving Channels*, A Blackbaud Desktop Reference, Chapter 5, 2012, <https://www.blackbaud.com/files/resources/7-12.Desktop.Book.Web.pdf>, Accessed October 3, 2014.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

the night of the event. Additionally, over the course of the last three months, LCM's leadership has hosted three budget/financial management trainings, where all staff members learned their roles and responsibilities for keeping LCM financially healthy. At these trainings, everyone was free to ask any questions, no matter how basic, and the result was a more informed staff. After the trainings, I heard several staff members comment on things they learned that they had no knowledge of beforehand. Thus, there is a precedence that a special events kick-off meeting could yield a similar result of informed, active, all-hands-on-deck teamwork.

While LASM does not currently have special events kick-off meetings, the assistant director of development attests to the success of their gala staff training three weeks before the event and their post-gala meeting where staff is thanked and given the chance to evaluate their experience of the event. She says that a kick-off meeting would help to get her staff more involved and invested sooner and that it is a practice that could increase the success of their annual gala.<sup>80</sup>

### **C. Define, track, and evaluate measures of success**

Another essential best practice for nonprofits is the determining how to measure the success of programs, practices, and events. Success cannot be measured without first defining goals, and researching those metrics tracked by industry leaders is a good place to start the process. Again, I focused my research on best practices for special events and compiled those metrics that were consistently listed from the following sources, Blackbaud's *Best Practices for Fundraising Success*,<sup>81</sup> Network for Good's ebook, *Host Your Most Fabulous Fundraising*

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<sup>80</sup> Interview with LASM Assistant Director of Development, October 15, 2014.

<sup>81</sup> Ulrich McLaughlin, Susan, "Analyzing the Value of Special Events: Strategies for Success," *Best Practices for Fundraising Success: Diversifying Giving Channels*, A Blackbaud Desktop Reference, Chapter 5, 2012, <https://www.blackbaud.com/files/resources/7-12.Desktop.Book.Web.pdf>, Accessed October 3, 2014.

*Event*,<sup>82</sup> and *Analyze This: A Nonprofit's Guide to Fundraising Analytics* by Convio (now Blackbaud) and Event 360 (a fundraising production company, whose clients include Susan G. Komen for the Cure and the Alzheimer's Association).<sup>83</sup> Often nonprofits can get overwhelmed by the vast amount of the data they can collect from a special event, and they are frequently not even sure what type of data they should be collecting.<sup>84</sup> Therefore, the following is the compilation list of metrics from those three sources that can guide nonprofit's event objectives:

- Number of attendees (new to the event and returning to the event)
- Number of sponsorships (new, returning, upgraded)
- Number of prospects who attended (new, returning)
- Number of volunteers involved (new, returning)
- Number of tickets sold (new, returning)
  - If volunteers/committee members are successful fundraisers, this number should be at least three to four times higher than the number of volunteers.<sup>85</sup>
  - A good measure is for every one volunteer, there should be a median of three to four donors (or ticket buyers).<sup>86</sup>
- Number of gifts (i.e., auction items)
- Amount per gift

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<sup>82</sup> Network for Good, *Host Your Most Fabulous Fundraising Event: 7 Steps to Raising More Money*, [http://www.fundraising123.org/files/Events2014.pdf?\\_utma=108253341.1254350307.1412180590.1412180590.1412180590.1&\\_utmb=108253341.7.9.1412180707471&\\_utmc=108253341&\\_utmx=&\\_utmz=108253341.1412180590.1.1.utmcsr=thefundingseed.com%7Cutmccn=%28referral%29%7Cutmcmd=referral%7Cutmct=/resources/&\\_utmv=-&\\_utmk=16646966](http://www.fundraising123.org/files/Events2014.pdf?_utma=108253341.1254350307.1412180590.1412180590.1412180590.1&_utmb=108253341.7.9.1412180707471&_utmc=108253341&_utmx=&_utmz=108253341.1412180590.1.1.utmcsr=thefundingseed.com%7Cutmccn=%28referral%29%7Cutmcmd=referral%7Cutmct=/resources/&_utmv=-&_utmk=16646966), Accessed October 5, 2014.

<sup>83</sup> Bodell, Kari, Alan Cooke, Meghan Dankovich, Jeff Shuck, James Young, *Analyze This: A Nonprofit's Guide to Fundraising Analytics*, Convio and Event 360, 2010, <http://www.fundraising123.org/files/jointheracerwr2010.pdf>, Accessed October 5, 2014.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

While all of this data may exist within a nonprofit's records and databases, if it is not tracked over a period of time and subsequently evaluated, setting goals with metrics is useless. After the actual event is finished, the key stage of evaluation begins. In addition to staff (or consultants) working on data collection from the metrics set out before the event, the nonprofit should also complete evaluations from staff, volunteers, board members, donors, and attendees.<sup>87</sup> An evaluation form or e-survey can be emailed to all parties involved in the event, and it can also be presented at post-event meetings with staff, volunteers, and board members. The feedback collected should then be compiled and reviewed by key staff so that adjustments can be made in the planning of next year's event.

While LCM's development office does not currently keep track of all of the metrics listed on the previous page, it does keep track of the number of attendees, the number of sponsors (new and returning), the number of tickets sold at each level, and the number of gifts. This data is crucial for LCM as the development office plans its goals for the next year's events. LASM also tracks the same data as LCM and additionally tracks the number of news articles written about their gala each year to see how successful their marketing efforts were. LASM plans to add another metric to their post-event marketing evaluation in the future, and that is assessing the number of Facebook and Twitter posts, shares, and likes they receive related to their gala.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Network for Good, *Host Your Most Fabulous Fundraising Event: 7 Steps to Raising More Money*, [http://www.fundraising123.org/files/Events2014.pdf?\\_utma=108253341.1254350307.1412180590.1412180590.1412180590.1&\\_utmb=108253341.7.9.1412180707471&\\_utmc=108253341&\\_utmx=&\\_utmz=108253341.1412180590.1.1.\\_utmcsrc=thefundingseed.com%7Cutmccn=%28referral%29%7Cutmcmd=referral%7Cutmcct=/resources/&\\_utmv=-&\\_utmik=16646966](http://www.fundraising123.org/files/Events2014.pdf?_utma=108253341.1254350307.1412180590.1412180590.1412180590.1&_utmb=108253341.7.9.1412180707471&_utmc=108253341&_utmx=&_utmz=108253341.1412180590.1.1._utmcsrc=thefundingseed.com%7Cutmccn=%28referral%29%7Cutmcmd=referral%7Cutmcct=/resources/&_utmv=-&_utmik=16646966), Accessed October 5, 2014.

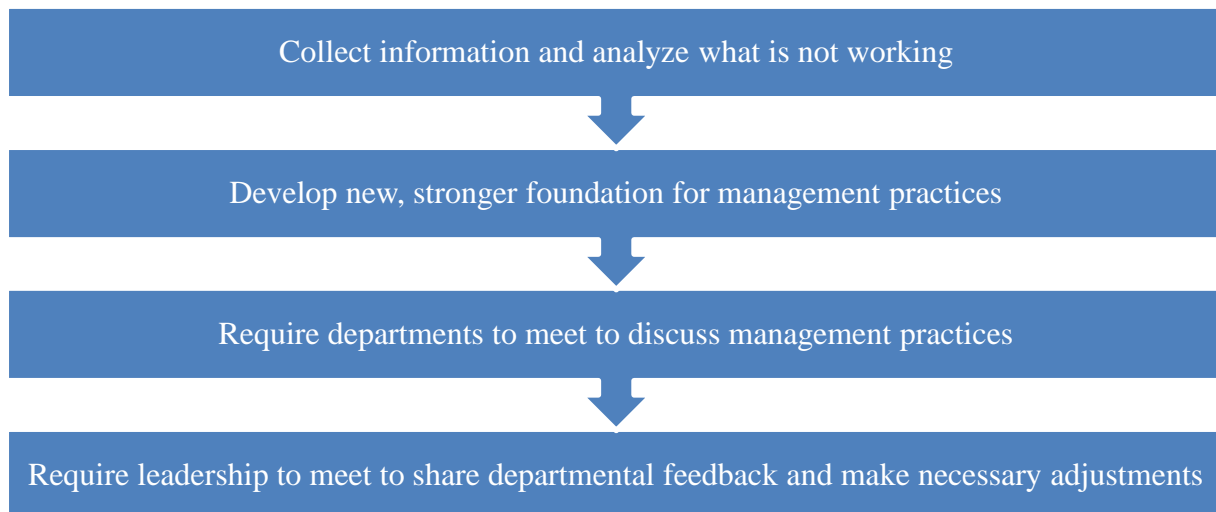
<sup>88</sup> Interview with LASM Assistant Director of Development, October 15, 2014.

## Chapter 5: Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on my SWOT analysis and after examining those current best practices in the sector that would be most beneficial to LCM's present challenges. I did not include recommendations for the Museum's legal applications because the Museum does not currently have any major legal issues.

### A. Management

In my SWOT analysis, the three weaknesses I specified were all related to management: understaffing, silos, and high turnover. To improve these issues, I recommend that LCM reassess its management approach through the following steps:



**Figure 14 - Steps to Effective Management**

First, the Museum leadership must collect information and determine what is not working. With the high turnover rate over the last year, there are likely some commonalities of dissatisfaction among those who left their positions. LCM leadership should review notes from exit interviews with former staff and analyze their current management methods based on what they discover. It is critical for a nonprofit with high turnover to take a moment and honestly review its practices.



Once this information has been thoroughly examined, LCM leadership should survey current staff to determine how management policies can better serve their productivity. Based on all of this feedback as well as on the results of researching the practices of similar organizations, LCM should lay out a new foundation for management practices. My suggestions for LCM's new, stronger management foundation would include:

- *Encourage collaboration between departments.* – Schedule regular meetings between departments whose work directly impacts each other. Leadership should meet and determine how staff from other departments can help with large projects and events that may be “owned” by another department. They should also acknowledge and reward staff for their collaborative work. This can be as simple as asking all members of a cross-departmental team to stand up and receive applause at a staff meeting, or slightly more involved, like a congratulatory pizza party or lunch outside the office.
- *Deliver more training opportunities.* – With more training, staff will become more confident, knowledgeable, and prepared. They are also more likely to be appreciative of their workplace for providing opportunities to learn new skills and tips that can make their jobs more fulfilling. More training would also set up an environment for lower-level staff within the office to advance to upper-level leadership positions over time, which would mean easier transitions into these positions and less vacancies. For LCM, I think it would be particularly important to offer interested, qualified floor staff training opportunities that could help transition them into positions in the education or administrative offices.

- *Offer support to staff who are overwhelmed and overworked.* – To avoid staff burn-out and to increase retention, LCM should consider options for supporting some positions with either an administrative assistant (part or full-time). Within LCM's development office, my recommendation, if money were not a factor, would be to add a third full-time position, either a development assistant or a donor manager. LASM's assistant director of development also believes a three-person development office would greatly increase their productivity: a director of development, an assistant director of development, and a special events coordinator.<sup>89</sup>

Another less costly option would be to provide long-term, paid internships to local college students. While internships are listed on LCM's website and on various other local job listing sites, these can be unpredictable means of acquiring requisite help. For example, in the development office, it would be nearly impossible to put on the number and scale of fundraising events LCM does without the work of interns, and without someone with the right skills who just happens to apply at the right time, it can be disastrous. Therefore, I recommend that LCM develop relationships with local universities and create a practice where recent Bachelor's and Master's recipients, current graduate students, and junior or senior undergraduate students are sought out on a regular basis. These long-term internships could even offer a small stipend to elicit a more competitive pool of applicants who would likely be more committed to their hours at the Museum than if the internship were unpaid. To be most effective for LCM, these

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<sup>89</sup> Interview with LASM Assistant Director of Development, October 15, 2014.

internships should last five to twelve months. That way staff would have a consistent team member within their departments, and they would not have to constantly train new interns.

- *Find ways to build team spirit between administrative staff and floor staff.* –

Finally, LCM should find fun ways to build camaraderie between the floor and administrative staff. With both teams working hard in their two different worlds, it can be difficult for administrative and floor staff to feel connected. This makes it challenging during those times, like special events, when everyone must come together. A simple way to build team spirit here would be to have a monthly potluck/lunch-and-learn where all staff are invited to attend a brief learning session, while sharing lunch and visiting with one another afterwards. All staff would be encouraged to lead these informal learning sessions on topics they deem pertinent. During my practicum at the Greater New Orleans Foundation last fall, I went to several lunch-and-learn sessions and thought they were an excellent management tool to build connectedness within an organization.

After the new management practices are approved and applied, LCM leadership must still provide opportunities for staff to raise concerns and share their own solutions to issues they face in the workplace. I recommend that individual departments meet bi-annually to discuss management practices—what is working and what could be improved. After those meetings, department heads should also meet bi-annually to share their individual department's feedback and make necessary adjustments.

## **B. Development**

My primary recommendation for development at LCM is to cultivate a stronger culture of philanthropy. This would mean that every staff member, board member, and volunteer would understand the critical role that fundraising plays in LCM's ability to continue its mission and could then serve as a passionate ambassador of the organization. I would start this culture shift by mapping out in what ways LCM has elements of a culture of philanthropy and in what areas it is lacking.

From my observations, LCM's culture of philanthropy is evident in the following ways:

- CEO regularly involved in fundraising
- Experienced development director
- Staff and board members who believe in the mission
- Some staff and board who cultivate relationships in support of LCM

Here are my recommendations for LCM to more fully realize a culture of philanthropy:

- *Define what a culture of philanthropy means for each staff member.* – The CEO and development director work with other departmental heads to determine the specific ways in which adopting a culture of philanthropy affects each position at the Museum. These roles are then clearly spelled out, given as hand-outs at development training sessions, and included as part of these job descriptions in all materials from that point forward (including job postings online, new employee handbooks, etc.).
- *Present regular staff fundraising trainings.* – CEO and development office should lead an all-staff training session/workshop where the importance of fundraising

and the concept of the culture of philanthropy are discussed. At this training, staff leave with various takeaways and calls to action, such as:

- Each staff member is asked to contribute one donation (either a ticket sale, auction item, raffle item, etc.) for one special event each year.
- Each staff member is asked to learn and be able to articulate to others a case for support of LCM.
- *Present regular board fundraising trainings.* – CEO and development office hold a similar training session for board members at the beginning of each fiscal year. At this meeting, board members sign up for at least one of the fundraising task forces: development, special events, or program sponsorship. These initial meetings are followed up with additional meetings/trainings, where staff share their fundraising successes and learn more about successful fundraising practices.
- *Introduce special event kick-off meetings.* – Fundraising events are all introduced through kick-off meetings about two to three months before the event, where all staff learn what the event entails, its importance, and what everyone’s individual role is to make the event a success. This is a fun meeting with snacks and craft making (for the event’s decorations), which should spark interest and enthusiasm for the event.

### **C. Financial Management**

To achieve good financial management, nonprofits should consider “budgeting as a planning tool”<sup>90</sup> that does not lose sight of the following rules:

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<sup>90</sup> Weikart, Lynn, Greg Chen, and Ed Sermier, *Budgeting and Financial Management for Nonprofit Organizations: Using Money to Drive Mission Success*, Sage/CQPress, 2013, Page 20.

1. Analyze external circumstances “to determine their resources and determine how best to use them.”<sup>91</sup>
2. Be realistic and objective.<sup>92</sup>

Both of these considerations should be taken into account when assessing LCM’s current revenue streams and determining where adjustments should be made to achieve better financial stability and growth. After I analyzed LCM’s revenue sources and compared them to external circumstances (i.e., nonprofit competitors), one area that I recommend LCM reassess its financial strategy is in its membership price levels. While LCM laudably wants to keep admission and membership costs as low as possible for its visitors, I advise the Museum to raise their membership price levels to be more comparable to their competitors. LCM’s “Family II” membership level at \$65 is by far the Museum’s most popular membership purchased (see Figure 15). However, a relatively small increase of \$10 to \$75 for “Family II” should not dissuade existing members from renewing or non-members from becoming members. Assuming that this price increase would not significantly affect current membership sales, that extra \$10 for each “Family II” level sold would increase total membership sales by about 10%. This price increase would not be an arbitrary upsurge, but rather a realistic adjustment based on the current financial environment of local children’s museums (see “Opportunities,” pages 43-44).

Additionally, with about 2,600 LCM memberships purchased in 2013, only about 884, or 34%, were renewing members. This means that membership retention has definite room for improvement. The key factor in LCM’s low membership retention is that many people buy memberships simply because they are required to be a member to book a birthday party at the

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<sup>91</sup> Weikart, Lynn, Greg Chen, and Ed Sermier, *Budgeting and Financial Management for Nonprofit Organizations: Using Money to Drive Mission Success*, Sage/CQPress, 2013, Page 20.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid, Pages 21-22.

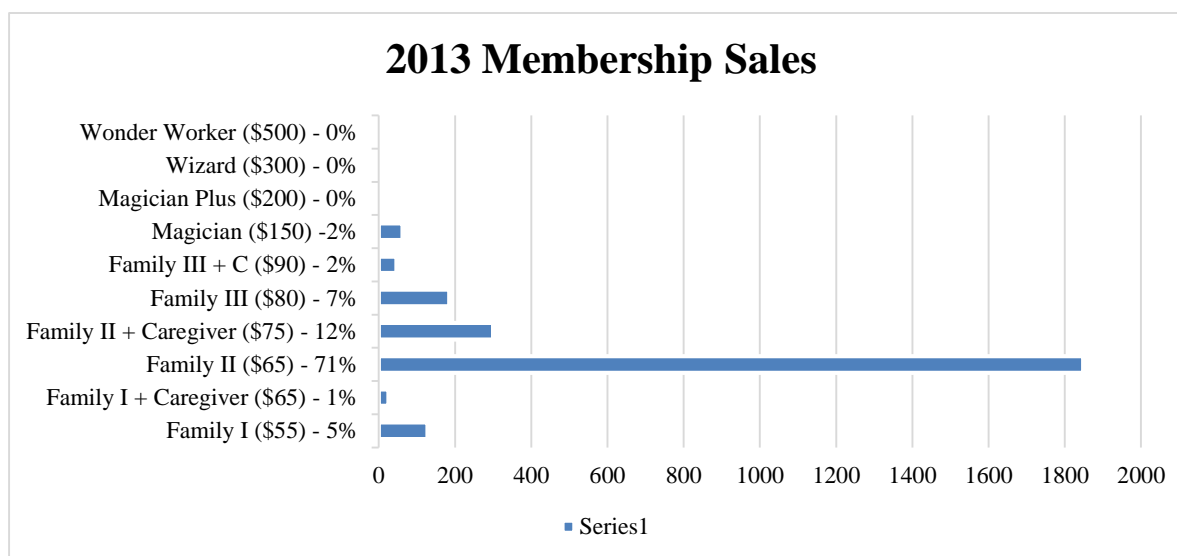


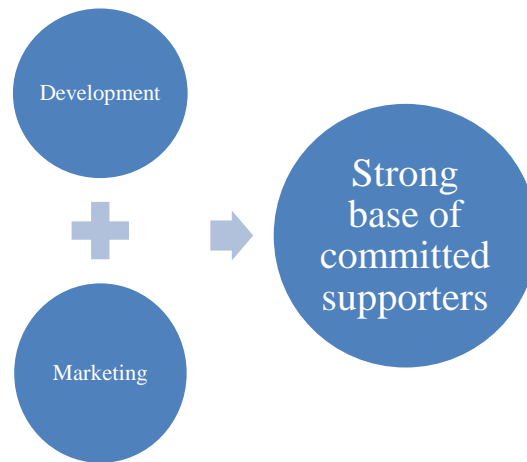
Figure 15 – 2013 LCM Membership Sales by Price Level

Museum. For the Museum’s financial documents to more accurately reflect earned revenue from memberships versus earned revenue from birthday parties, LCM should completely separate these two revenue streams. Other regional nonprofits, like the Louisiana Art and Science Museum in Baton Rouge; the Audubon Zoo; and the Mississippi Children’s Museum, all have separate rates for members and non-members booking birthday parties. This seems to be a more effective way to set birthday party rates that would also give a more accurate reflection of the membership retention rates from year to year. It would also help LCM to better “tie performance to the budget,”<sup>93</sup> another important rule of managing a budget effectively. If this separation is made, birthday party revenue from year to year will clearly show the performance record of birthday parties as will the membership revenue. These new, more accurate numbers will help LCM understand where it is succeeding and where it can improve to increase membership sales and birthday party sales.

<sup>93</sup> Weikart, Lynn, Greg Chen, and Ed Sermier, *Budgeting and Financial Management for Nonprofit Organizations: Using Money to Drive Mission Success*, Sage/CQPress, 2013, Page 22.

## D. Marketing

The marketing and development departments have many connected goals: capture the attention of audiences/donors; diversify audiences/donors; turn casual audiences/donors into champions for the organization. These shared objectives require a team who works together to reach the same result, a strong base of committed supporters (see Figure 16).



**Figure 16 - Formula for Successful Development and Marketing**

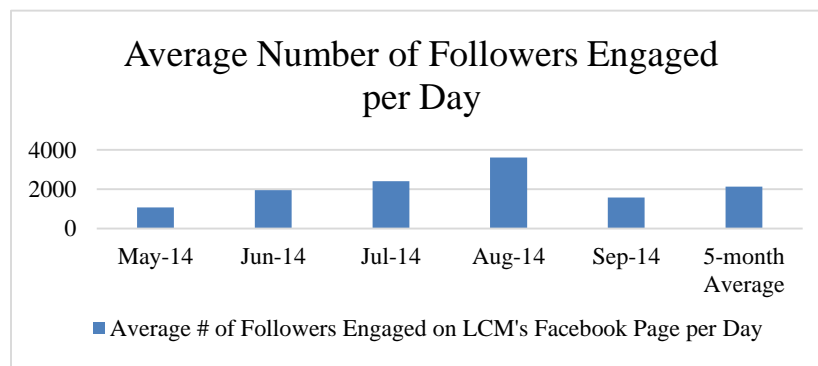
My recommendations for LCM to achieve a greater level of development/marketing teamwork include the following:

- *Continue to have regular marketing and development meetings.* – These departments are already meeting weekly, which they should continue to do; however, I advise that they also have a meeting every other month that is dedicated to sharing new ideas for the overall success of the two departments.
- *Divide marketing responsibilities among staff* – Since LCM’s deputy director is also serving as the marketing director, I recommend that the marketing department’s duties be divided more evenly to the two marketing/sales



coordinator positions. This is actually a practice that is already implemented in some ways. For example, the marketing and membership coordinator also manages the Museum’s social media pages, and the marketing and reservations coordinator also coordinates donation requests that the Museum receives. However, the key here for long-term success is for the deputy director to map out and delegate all of the marketing responsibilities related to the Museum’s varied promotional needs (education events, fundraising events, daily activities, annual fund support, etc.). Then, these responsibilities should be included in the job descriptions of these two marketing coordinator positions from this point forward, so that each marketing coordinator can more fully “own” certain tasks.

- *Increase creative social media engagement* – LCM currently has over 8,600 Facebook followers;<sup>94</sup> nearly 1,000 Twitter followers;<sup>95</sup> and 430 Instagram followers.<sup>96</sup> However, after analyzing LCM’s Facebook insights, I learned that over a five-month period from May through September 2014, only about 25% of LCM’s approximate 8,600 followers are engaged with its page (see Figure 17). Engagement is defined as liking, sharing, commenting, or clicking on posts.



**Figure 17 - LCM Facebook Page Data - Average Number of Engaged Followers per Day**

<sup>94</sup> LCM Facebook Page, <https://www.facebook.com/LouisianaChildrensMuseum>, Accessed October 6, 2014.

<sup>95</sup> LCM Twitter Page, <https://twitter.com/LouisianaKids>, Accessed October 6, 2014.

<sup>96</sup> LCM Instagram Page, <http://instagram.com/louisianakids>, Accessed October 6, 2014.

To achieve greater engagement and ongoing communication with followers, I recommend that LCM's marketing department research what works for similar children's museums (and other nonprofit organizations with a similar audience) who have stronger social media interactivity with their followers. For example, at LASM, their social media posts are primarily focused on engaging their followers. They cite success with posing various questions and news articles related to their exhibits, which they believe their followers will find compelling and want to share with friends and family who may have been completely unaware of LASM before seeing these posts.<sup>97</sup> LCM could use this approach as a model and post less about the daily activities at the Museum and more about general topics related to the Museum's mission, programs, and exhibits. An example of this would be sharing an article about the importance of play in the development of children's social skills, and then asking parents to share the types of play they see their children engaging in regularly.



**Figure 18 - CHAIRish the Children Facebook Post**

In addition to this research, I advise LCM's marketing department continue to embrace more creativity in its posts. A successful example of creative posting was used to promote this year's disco-themed CHAIRish. LCM's marketing team created a JibJab video where the CHAIRish event chairs' faces were placed on the bodies of disco dancers (see Figure 18). This was

<sup>97</sup> Interview with LASM Assistant Director of Development, October 15, 2014.

a perfect promotional tool used to publicize the festive fundraiser to LCM's target audience. An LCM Facebook post with the video reached over 1,600 people, more than double the number reached from the next highest Facebook post during that month.

- *Invest in a more easily editable website.* – My last marketing recommendation is for LCM to invest in a new website that is more dynamic and easily editable for key staff. Since LCM's marketing department is in the early planning stages of launching a new website, this is an opportune time for them to consider one that can be more easily edited by the marketing staff at the Museum. This would save time and money that is currently spent on a webmaster who works offsite.

## **Chapter 6: Conclusion**

My experience at LCM has been one of transition. Coming from a career in the film industry, the world of nonprofits and museums was very new to me when I started as an LCM intern. Each day, I soaked up every tidbit of knowledge I could, and I looked at every assignment as a learning opportunity. I was comfortable in my role as eager student. Suddenly, three months in, I had to make an unexpected transition—from intern to special events coordinator. This transition was quick and a little scary. One Friday, I was sitting at the intern's desk, and the next Monday, I was sitting at the special events coordinator's desk. This instant transition forced me to embrace a hands-on crash course on nonprofit fundraising, event planning, and volunteer coordination. Although every day during this period was challenging, I approached it one step at a time, and I relied on what I had learned from the development director and previous special events coordinator, the foundation of knowledge I had accumulated through my arts administration coursework, and my instincts. Thus far, this approach has served me well, and I feel prepared for my next transition into a more seasoned nonprofit professional.

LCM is also facing its share of transitions. With the recent turnovers, LCM must find a way to capture the new energy and ideas from incoming staff, while also examining what caused outgoing staff to leave and making necessary adjustments. The most obvious transition LCM currently faces is its steady evolution from a children's museum to an early learning village. This unprecedented transformation will require LCM to chart new territories for nonprofits, museums, and educational institutions. There will certainly be bumps along the road to achieve ELV; however, with LCM's passionate leadership and focus on its mission as well as with its committed community supporters, it will continue to be a trailblazer that is constantly evolving and progressing to better serve the region's families and children.

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## Appendix A – Case Statement for Education



### **Education Programs at LCM**

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In the Greater New Orleans region, the Louisiana Children's Museum is the primary resource developed specifically for young children and their families that is open to the public. LCM's five areas of strategic program focus include: Literacy, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math); Health and Wellness; Environmental Education; and Arts & Culture. LCM's programs are developed around a "continuum framework" connecting early learning to lifelong learning, with a focus on young children. Our programs are holistic, with core competencies of Early Childhood Development, Family Learning, and Informal Education. LCM's strategy is to develop targeted, successful programs for each age group of the continuum, expand their availability off-site, and then add a training component of professional development for adults. LCM is the region's premiere informal education center, providing engaging activities to enhance school curriculum through cultural events, artistic programs and science activities.

#### **HISTORY AND MISSION OF THE LOUISIANA CHILDREN'S MUSEUM**

**Mission:** The Louisiana Children's Museum promotes hands-on participatory learning for children of all ages. Encouraging discovery through observation, inquiry, creative construction, role-playing, problem-solving, and free play, the Museum motivates children to develop their cognitive, physical and social skills while enjoying fruitful interaction with adults and peers.

**History:** Incorporated in 1984 and opened to visitors in 1986, the Louisiana Children's Museum is located in the historic Warehouse District in downtown New Orleans. The Museum was originally housed in a 6,000 square foot rented area on the third floor of the building it currently occupies. In 1994, the Board of Directors purchased the entire building and expanded the Museum into the renovated 45,000 square foot space. The three primary audiences are children between birth and 12, their parents and educators.

In 2004, the Museum hosted the Association of Children's Museum's Interactivity conference and co-hosted the American Association of Museum's conference. Also in 2004, the first Zagat publication of Family Attractions throughout the United States listed the LCM as the top children's museum in its survey.

In 2005, Hurricane Katrina caused over \$1 million in damages to the Museum, which was closed for ten months while undergoing repairs. Upon reopening, a new purpose was offered the community, and deeper offsite relationships were developed. Over the past five years, more than 36,000 staff hours have been invested in offsite programs, with Head Start centers and public schools being the recipients of those partnerships. Our Play Power program was developed to offer children a chance to grow and heal through play. Joining Play Power were parent engagement programs, such as Family Camp, Family Fest, and Prime Time. For these efforts the Museum was awarded the Colin and Alma Powell Legacy Award in June 2008. The museum has welcomed two First Ladies to tour our programs. Laura Bush came in 2009 and First Lady Michelle Obama visited Eat, Sleep, Play – a childhood obesity program – in 2011.

Since Hurricane Katrina, community engagement efforts and leaderships around models of collaboration, such as New Orleans Kids Partnership and the Early Learning Village, have positioned the Museum to become more integrally involved in civic and municipal affairs. The Early Learning Village will be an eight acre early childhood campus in New Orleans City Park, led by the LCM in partnerships with Tulane, LSU, and several state agencies.

#### **WHO WE SERVE**

Louisiana Children's Museum proudly serves a diverse audience of children and their families. LCM serves children and their parents from birth to 12. Annual on-site visitors are approximately 50% each children and adults. We see more than 120,000 visitors to the Museum each year (primarily from New Orleans and the seven surrounding parishes), and we reach thousands more children through our community engagement programs.

#### **OUR PROGRAMS**

**LCM reinforces school-based learning:** The Louisiana Children's Museum was created as a community resource for young children and their families as well as for the area school children and educators. LCM encourages the development of cognitive, physical and social skills in a nurturing and creative environment. While respecting the value of play for children of all ages, the Museum reinforces school-based learning and understanding achieved through interactivity acquired through exhibits and enriching programs. Programs are delivered both on-site at the Museum and in the community at large through our outreach programs in public schools, Head Start and childcare centers throughout the city. LCM delivers more than 400 high-quality educational programs every year.

**GOVERNANCE AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE.** The Louisiana Children's Museum is governed by a 29-member volunteer board of directors which represent the diverse populations, talent pools and occupations that characterize New Orleans. This board steers the Museum through its long-term planning and delegates the operations of the Museum through the Executive Director. Board members must possess an interest in the education of children and be representative of the community. The board brings a variety of skills that are useful in non-profit management (i.e. expertise in education, law, finance, marketing, insurance, fundraising, event planning, etc.).

Board members are elected to three-year terms, and no board member may serve more than two consecutive terms.

LCM is led by Julia Bland, Chief Executive Officer, who has been with the Museum for 17 years. Julia is nationally renowned for her leadership and knowledge of children's museums, and she has been recognized numerous times for her achievements including: President, Association of Children's Museums; member, National Museum and Library Board (Presidential Appointee); Chairman, America's Promise collaborative of New Orleans Kids Partnership; and Champions of Change participant with the White House in 2013. The LCM has a current staff of 32, including an administrative staff of 14 full-time and 18 part-time floor staff which help with the day-to-day operations. LCM welcomes hundreds of corporate, school and individual volunteers who help with a variety of tasks.

#### **FINANCIAL STRENGTH AND SUSTAINABILITY**

LCM has eleven diversified revenue streams, with no more than 20% from any single stream contributing to the overall revenue. Our three largest revenue streams are grant-funded programs, admissions, and fundraising events. Happily, these sources represent the strongest growth areas for LCM. Admissions have increased approximately 5-10% on a month-over-month basis for the past ten months, showing a positive trend linked to institutional and programmatic relevance and success. Fundraising goals have been consistently met or exceeded. LCM's grant-funded programs are tied to relevant, community needs, and have been successful in strengthening over time. Last year, LCM went through a transformational strategic planning process guided by the Boston Consulting Group. The outcome of that process is a Strategic Plan, rooted in our five focus areas, that ensures sustainability in every sense.

#### **COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS: A STRENGTH OF LCM**

LCM is one of the premier "team players" in the broader community. Our work involves collaboration within numerous organizations including: **Tulane Institute of Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health; Recovery, Orleans Parish and St. Bernard Parish School Districts; Head Start; Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities;** and many others, with both direct services and training opportunities to reach a broader segment of the population. The LCM co-founded the **New Orleans Kids Partnership** to deliver services to public school students in the area in 2006, specifically through intentional integration of services. **New Orleans Public Library** is formally in a co-granted partnership with LCM through Literacy Pathways which are offered weekly at LCM to public school students. The Museum benefits from multiple informal relationships of area professionals including scientists, educators, storytellers, medical experts, etc. who participate in weekend programs. Educational partners also include numerous public schools in Orleans and Jefferson Parishes as well.

## **WHY THE LOUISIANA CHILDREN’S MUSEUM IS UNIQUELY SUITED TO REINFORCE SCHOOL-BASED EDUCATION**

In 2012, LCM participated and led two municipal efforts addressing key issues for the area’s children. Fit NOLA Partnership developed a multi-sector blueprint for the city to become one of the top ten fittest cities by our 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2018. LCM led the planning for the campaign for Grade Level Reading for our city—the only submission from the state whose children rank 50<sup>th</sup> in 4<sup>th</sup> grade reading scores. In 2010, we were voted one of the top 50 Louisiana attractions for people over age 50. The Museum and its staff have seen many other accomplishments in recent years including: Executive Director Julia Bland has served as President of the **Association of Children’s Museums** board and executive committee; Mrs. Bland also was appointed by then-President Bush to serve on the **National Museum and Library Board**. On-site, LCM is a safe community-gathering place where families can participate in our daily literacy-based art, music, story time and play activities. LCM has bi-weekly, interdisciplinary programs for toddlers through **Toddler Time**, hands-on science related challenges for older children (ages 5-11) through **Fetch!** and **Super Science Saturdays**, an **Art Trek** Visual Arts Studio, along with cultural festivals and programming that celebrates **Louisiana’s rich cultural heritage** through artists, musicians, storytellers and dancers. Off-Site, LCM’s **Play Power** program empowers children to grow, develop and heal through play. It has reached public school students since 2006 in the region’s most devastated areas; it teaches children about respect for themselves, others and their community while building language and literacy skills. In addition, LCM hosts activities for the entire family during **Family Fests** that provide families with information on social services while enjoying the Museum’s fun environment, **family literacy camps** and an eight-week **parenting series**.

### **EDUCATION AT LCM**

Louisiana Children’s Museum is known for its diverse programming, designed to reach audiences that vary by age, interest, learning style and ethnic background, but all of whom enjoy the authentic, hand-on experiences that change weekly. Educational programming is the primary method of connecting with community talent, while offering variety and value. LCM requests support of this significant aspect of our mission delivery. Throughout the course of each year, over 400 programs are delivered through our Art Trek art studio, our newly refurbished First Adventures (toddler) area, our Talk and Play Literacy Center, our Times Picayune Theatre and in broad-based programs such as our cultural heritage festivals (Latin American, Native American and African American), science explorations, health fairs and presentations by local musical, arts or dance groups. Specific educational programs delivered at LCM include:

#### **a. Literacy Education Programs**

1. **Word Play:** A multi-faceted literacy program at the museum and in the school community. Word Play addresses language and literacy development in the three domains of a young child—home, school and community/museum.
2. **Play Power:** A school-embedded program in two area schools (Orleans and St. Bernard Parishes) that reaches students in grades PK-2<sup>nd</sup> grade on a daily basis. Rich in literacy and math

content, Play Power engages students and complements the academic objectives of our partner schools.

3. Literacy Pathways: Two-hour educational experiences designed to use our interactive exhibits (Little Winn Dixie Grocery Store, Talk and Play Literacy Center, Proud to Call It Home architecture exhibit and Louisiana Hospitality Foundation Kids' Café) as stations or context for introducing pre-literacy skills in a play-based approach.

4. Prime Time: Public school students are transported to the Museum for the reading of a high-quality book; they are fed dinner; and there is time built in for literacy skill improvement with the families.

5. Daily Story Time: Daily storytelling time at the Museum builds and reinforces literacy skills in our visitors.

#### **b. STEM Education Programs**

1. Saturday Programs: Rich educational programs presented weekly and including Financial Literacy, Oil and Gas Exploration Day, Super Science Chemistry Day, and Supersauras Saturday. LCM also presents daily Fetch! Science programming at the Museum.

2. Stuffee: Educational program focusing on the digestive, respiratory and circulatory systems, Stuffee is presented both on-site at the Museum and off-site in area schools.

3. Earth Balloon: A community outreach program uses a 23' tall balloon as a classroom to reach about continents, countries, oceans, and the Seven Wonders of the World.

4. StarLab: A community outreach program that is a portable planetarium used to teach Greek/Roman mythology.

5. UMIGO: "U Make It Go" math manipulative, a new program addition in conjunction with the Children's Museum of Manhattan.

#### **c. Health and Wellness Education Programs**

1. Healthy Harvest: Aligning with National Food Day's month-long programming in October, Healthy Harvest consists of food education (promoting safer, healthier diets), education regarding supporting sustainable and organic farms, and education regarding reducing hunger and increasing access to healthy foods.

2. Winn Dixie Grocery Exhibit and Kids' Café Exhibit offer interactive experiences of selecting foods and serving foods that provide healthy alternatives to a daily menu, while offering role play in the various performances of shopper, clerk, chef, server and customer.

3. Sensory Friendly Family Nights: Monthly events at which families of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder can enjoy the museum in a safe, friendly manner after-hours while networking and collaboratively sharing resources.
4. Stuffedee: Educational program focusing on the digestive, respiratory and circulatory systems, Stuffedee is presented both on-site at the Museum and off-site in area schools.
5. Future plans include a comprehensive approach to health education through our Early Learning Village, highlighted by interactive exhibits tied to ***Follow that Food***, outdoor edible gardens, a working kitchen, public café and more.

**d. Environmental Education Programs**

1. Earth Week: A week-long celebration to learn about the Earth's natural resources and the environment of Louisiana; a series of hands-on activities to learn about issues ranging from recycling to Louisiana wetlands, alternative energy and various natural habitats.
2. Farm Week: A week-long celebration focusing on the importance of eating healthy foods, buying fresh products and supporting local farming. It is also designed to offer opportunities for families to learn about urban farming, gardening and living green.

**e. Arts and Culture Education Programs**

1. Art Trek: A daily drop-in program offered in our on-site Art Studio at no extra charge that exposes children to high-quality world art, presented at a developmental level that is age-appropriate and focused on cultures, continents and centuries.
2. Cultural heritage festivals: LCM presents numerous cultural heritage festivals each year (Latin American, Native American, African American, French) to educate children and their families regarding the customs, food and practices of these diverse cultures.
3. Children's World's Fair: An annual "journey" through eight countries with STEM and cultural-related activities.



## Appendix B – Commitment to Community Engagement



### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

#### **SUMMARY**

The Louisiana Children's Museum (LCM) has developed a sustained commitment to low and moderate income children and families in our area. Through the oversight and coordination of our Director of Community Engagement, we have built upon our strengths as the primary regional resource for young children and their families for the past quarter century. As a top family destination, a leader in family programming, a community trainer, and with a history of leading community collaborations, the Museum is making an impact through implementation of best practices. LCM has created a series of daily, committed, wraparound programs in partnership with selected regional public schools. Our program Play Power (originally given us by the Children's Museum of Manhattan, who learned after 9-11 the powerful role children's museums can play during a time of community healing) is headquartered in public schools, where interactive and enrichment programs are offered to students throughout each and every day. In an effort to engage the parents and caregivers of the students we reach, the Museum has used its strength as a child-centered, family-friendly environment and destination to offer experiences that address such important needs as family literacy, mental health issues, and the building of respect and community – parents getting to know the parents of their children's friends. By reaching deeply into a school community, partnering with various regional resources in such a committed manner, the Museum has witnessed the impact created within the culture of the school, students' attitudes about respect, and trust built within their classrooms.

#### **COMMUNITY PARTNERS AND PARTNERSHIPS**

The Louisiana Children's Museum partners with various organizations within the region to offer resources for this grouping of programs. Primary partners are:

##### **HIGHER EDUCATION**

- Higher Education – Tulane, Xavier, UNO, SUNO, LSU Health & Science, LSU AgCenter, LSU Nursing
- Tulane Institute of Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (who co-deliver Family Camp parenting classes on Saturday mornings and assist / evaluate Play Power staff in community schools)

### **PUBLIC SYSTEMS**

- Louisiana Endowment for Humanities (whose award-winning Prime Time family literacy programs are held on Tuesday evenings in the spring and fall – and in high demand)
- New Orleans Public Library, who partners with our weekly or bi-weekly Literacy Pathways, offered to Orleans parish public school students free of charge
- Head Start, where 3-5 childcare centers house immersion programs on health education and literacy
- First Line Schools, where LCM staff have offered programs daily (Ashe, Dibert)
- RSD Central City School, where LCM staff have offered Play Power daily
- St. Bernard Parish Schools, where LCM staff have offered Play Power daily
- New Orleans Recreation Department, where LCM staff have offered Play Power in the summer

### **COMMUNITY COLLABORATIONS**

- New Orleans Kids Partnership (a 29 member organization who leverages its collective power and programs to strengthen students' opportunities to grow and develop into healthy children and youth) and various health care organizations – through issues, site work and events.
- SUFOC - Stand Up for our Children advocacy group of ten organizations
- New Orleans Geological Society, LA Chemistry Association, API, PIPE
- Jr. League of New Orleans

### **HISTORY OF SITES AND STAFF INVESTMENT**

Community programs have been offered in Orleans, Jefferson, St. Bernard, St. Tammany, Plaquemines, and Washington parishes. While the Louisiana Children's Museum offers outreach programs throughout the region, the differentiating factor of the programs of community engagement listed here are the long-term relationships built with partner sites. The largest investment has been in St. Bernard parish, with Andrew Jackson Elementary School, Smith Elementary, Trist, Gautier Elementary and Davies being the primary sites. In Orleans parish, Edgar Harney Elementary and KIPP in central city, MLK, Jr. School in the lower 9<sup>th</sup> ward, Ashe Elementary and Dibert Elementary in mid-city have benefitted the most from LCM daily and weekly engagement over three or more years. Paid staff hours total over 40,500 hours since 2006, and annual "contact hours" are just shy of 20,000.

### **MENTAL HEALTH AND PHYSICAL HEALTH**

#### **PLAY POWER (delivered daily since 2006)**

The Louisiana Children's Museum's signature off site program, reaching children in grades Pre-K through 3<sup>rd</sup> on a daily basis, empowers children to grow, develop and heal through play. This program, rich in science and math content, engages students and develops life skills such as

collaborative planning and critical thinking. Since 2013, the focus has been layered with building resiliency skills. Principals of Play Power schools have said that our program has positively changed the culture of the schools. First grade teachers have proclaimed that students have built a sense of community and new respect for fellow classmates through this interactive program, where they leave invigorated and ready for their next class. Second grade teachers have been amazed at the creative problem-solving skills this program has fostered. Strengthened school attendance, library usage and conflict management skills have been linked to Play Power, as well. Tulane child psychologists working with the program have contended that for many children participating in Play Power, our dedicated space within the school building represents the safest environment in the students' lives. **Nearly 10,000 different students have benefitted from the Play Power program (offered weekly at the various sites). Annually, over 15,000 contact hours are committed to this program.**

#### **EAT, SLEEP, PLAY (delivered since 2011)**

In conjunction with the Children's Museum of Manhattan, the Michael Cohen Group and the National Institutes of Health (NIH), LCM has delivered an 11 week early childhood obesity program to childcare centers in the New Orleans area. The curriculum, the first of its kind in the country, is based on the NIH *We Can* health curriculum, and designed as a prevention approach. Royal Castle Child Development Center was the initial center to benefit from this parent and child weekly experience, where three sessions were offered to the center. Health and fitness are approached through each session in art, movement, reading, music and healthy snack portions of the program. First Lady Michelle Obama visited our program as her first visit to a *Let's Move! Museums* program.

### **LITERACY**

#### **TARGET LITERACY PATHWAYS (delivered since 2008)**

Literacy Pathways are a staff-facilitated field trip for public school students in grades Pre K – 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. Beginning with an interactive reading of a selected book, Literacy Pathways wind through three exhibits, with primary goals reinforced during each engagement. Play-based language development is a key component of this free field trip, which ends with a summary and wrap up of the two hours, and a pitch from a representative of the New Orleans Public Library. Library card registrations are handed out, as are individual copies of the book that inspired the interactive tour. 3,000 students participate in Literacy Pathways each school year. **Approximately 15,000 children served.**

#### **PRIME TIME (delivered since 2009)**

Prime Time is a 6-8 week award winning family literacy program created by Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities (LEH). The Museum has become the preferred site for Prime Time, as families have attended in record numbers. Both English speaking and Spanish speaking

programs have been delivered at LCM. Trained storytellers conduct the Prime Time series, where award-winning children's books with humanities themes and open discussions literature to the real world for participating families. Virtues and values are stressed throughout the conversations. Each family leaves with a book bag of quality children's literature to read before the next week's session. Transportation and dinner are provided.

#### **VIRTUAL PRE – K (delivered since early 2012)**

Created by the Chicago Public Schools under Paul Vallas and Arne Duncan, Virtual Pre-K is a school readiness program designed to show parents how children can learn virtually anywhere. The triangulated model of home-school/ center and community / museum is designed to engage parents in an active role of building their child's learning potential.

#### **WORD PLAY (delivered since 2012)**

Funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, Word Play is an early literacy program being developed to serve children between the ages of 2 – 5. Parents and caregivers of Head Start children in these ages will be involved in an 8 week language development series, built around the six essential pre-literacy skills. Professional development offerings will follow the program, allowing LCM to reach trainers and educators with this new approach, using the family and everyday moments for the learning process. Stand Up for Our Children is a community network that is being built around parent organizing and advocacy for their children's healthy development. The LCM's focus is aligned with the Word Play program to further strengthen literacy and school readiness skills.

### **PARENT ENGAGEMENT**

#### **FAMILY FEST (delivered since 2008)**

With the goal of building a stronger school community within the Play Power sites, LCM offers an afterhours private community event to the entire school population – students, parents, teachers and administrators. The Museum staff works with school administrators to prepare for Family Fest, so that needed resources - such as GED workshops, reading tutors, public healthcare insurance, and mental health resources - are offered to families participating in the event. Recent Family Fests have seen parents asking for inspirational speakers to better assist the parents' needs. Keith Leiderman, Director of Kingsley House, proclaimed Family Fest to be the highlight of the school year. A Fatherhood Consortium reported that  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the fathers from one of the groups signed up for GED classes the month following their Family Fest. Bussing, dinner and family resources are provided for families (which have numbered as high as 500 in total attendance).

**FAMILY CAMP (delivered since 2003)**

Family Camp is a parenting series held at the Louisiana Children's Museum. Since 2003 the Museum has partnered with the Tulane Institute of Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health to deliver weekly parenting classes (usually six weeks in length), with children participating in coordinated, interactive programs. Topics for Family Camp include: Everything your Four Year Old Wants You to Know, Discipline with Dignity, Substance Abuse, the Impact of the Media, Nutrition and Healthy Lifestyles, and various topics requested by participating parents. Tulane staff incorporates the best practice "Powerful Parenting Program" (initiated in Australia) as a model for delivery. Recent series have focused on PTSD needs of military families, and have met with great success.

**STAND UP FOR OUR CHILDREN (since 2012)**

A ten organization cohort group, assembled through the Greater New Orleans Foundation, has spent two years forming and advancing complementary programs that are focused on building organizing or advocacy skills for parents whose children are between birth and five years of age.

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT****TEACHER TRAINING**

Orientation and presentation to Play Power school faculty at beginning of school year and partnership collaboration. Museum educators review the package of resources that will be offered throughout the year, as well as an overview of our philosophical framework – the Museum's holistic curriculum (Learning Pathways and Literacy Pathways) that is tied to Louisiana's Department of Education requirements (grade level expectations). Training can be offered for the role of play in early childhood development.

## Appendix C – Impact of LCM Programs with Metrics

All LCM programs are evaluated, with the type of evaluations tailored to the audience targeted. In the Play Power sites, the past three years we have incorporated language and literacy skills into the overall curriculum. As such, we have collected scores from the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS). At the school site where 99% of the students are on free and reduced lunch, the DIBELS scores have seen the most dramatic change. Administered by the school staff, these scores have been shared with LCM, with the understanding that Play Power played a “contributing role” in the positive impact. In K, 1 and 2 grades, scores increased with 7% – 63% gains, with astonishing gains in Kindergarten First Sound Fluency (313% gain), Letter Naming Fluency (199% gain) and First Grade Nonsense and Whole Word Reading Fluency (794% gain). This school was a failing school in one of the most dangerous neighborhoods in town, so while these gains are significant, school scores remain unacceptable. The second immersion site for Play Power has a higher economic bracket, yet students increased their DIBELS scores from 4% to 123% on the 13 different indicators. Teacher evaluations at Harney Elementary School (low income site) rank these three indicators as the highest of 15 – Use creativity, Develop new skills, Show confidence. Asked how students use any information they have received from Play Power, teachers answered “Our students ask each other for advice in certain situations,” “My students have referenced concepts and ideas that are covered in Play Power,” and “Yes, by using teamwork strategies and vocabulary terms.” Parents are evaluated as well, to better understand if school time lessons are brought home. Reinforcing the success of that goal are the following top ranked indicators, as reported by parents: “Feel good when (s)he does good things, Appreciate his / her teachers, Be creative, Learn new things, Make better choices.”

Finally, feedback from the children offers additional impact. After the lesson plan called “*Creating a Tree of Hope*,” documented student comments include: “When I hold my Daddy’s hand I feel safe walking to school.” Following “*Finger painting to Music*” lesson, student comments included: “Can we do this next week? I love being messy!” Inspired by Faith Ringgold’s book *Tar Beach*, the “*Flying to Freedom*” lesson plan prompted the following student comments: “In order to fly you must be free” and “One day I am gonna own the White House because I will fly over it.” One semester of the program covers the “community,” with a growing understanding of neighborhood and community. Concepts of today’s experiences and our hopes for tomorrow are incorporated into this lesson. One child wrote (verbatim) and illustrated today’s community as “In my community has lots of fights” and “In the future I hope one day every school do not be mean.” And, a report from the “*Imagination Project*” inspired the following: “It’s like if you have a friend that’s invisible or you’re playing pirate and you aren’t even wearing pirate costumes” from a 1<sup>st</sup> grader and “Last year my little brother died and I have a new brother now and when I play with him I pretend like I’m playing with both of them” from a 2<sup>nd</sup> grader named Dominique.

Anecdotal feedback is abundant. Elementary school students who have come to LCM for Literacy Pathways talk about the book and field trip months later when staff members are in the school sites. Parents, grandparents (and even a great-grandparent) have often begged for continued programs of the two different 7-9 week family literacy programs we have offered (Word Play and Prime Time). After a Family Fest was held in collaboration with the Fatherhood Consortium, one of the organizers reported that 75% of the fathers signed up or GED classes, due to the resources provided at our event.

So important is the community voice, that in 2012 we re-designed our museum’s org chart to reflect the key community stakeholder relationships each department or position will need to build. Key Performance Indicators were tied to meeting with these significant players- partners - or users.

Since 2006, over 40,000 staff hours have been documented in the delivery of our community programs – whether onsite or throughout the region. Play Power alone has worked with nearly 10,000 students on a weekly basis, and current calculations suggest approximately 19,007 “contact hours” (hour spent with each child by LCM staff) represent the past 12 months of staff engagement.

Data and information collected from our programs is used in planning and strengthening the program for subsequent years. Evaluations, feedback and test results ensure continuous improvement in all programs. By way of example, feedback and evaluations from Play Power were seeking the authentic “voice of the child.” This year’s Play Power grant included funding for a “Documentation staff” who will photograph, collect quotes and artwork, videotape and otherwise record the journey to better build resiliency skills among the students participating.

## **Literacy Pathways**

Compiled by Ariadne Blayde, Literacy Pathways Coordinator

### **Numbers**

#### Entire School Year (September 2013 – May 2014)

- Total Groups Served: 63
- Total Children Served: 3125
  - Total Pre-K: 533
  - Total Kindergarten: 906
  - Total 1<sup>st</sup> Grade: 1184
  - Total 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade: 502

#### Fall (September 2013 – December 2013)

- Groups Served: 24
- Children Served: 1363
  - Pre-K: 5 groups, 197 students
  - Kindergarten: 10 groups, 453 students
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Grade: 12 groups, 502
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade: 5 groups, 211 students

#### Spring (January 2014 – May 2014)

- Groups Served: 39
- Children Served: 1762
  - Pre-K: 8 groups, 336 students
  - Kindergarten: 10 groups, 453 students
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Grade: 14 groups, 682 students
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade: 7 groups, 291 students



### **Quotes from Teacher Evaluations**

“The presentation was AWESOME! The teaching staff was enthusiastic and knowledgeable.” – Cherbonnier/Rillieux Elementary

“I loved how it got the students excited about writing stories.” – Audubon Charter

“The staff were very knowledgeable, creative and patient.” – Harney Elementary

“Wonderful! We loved it!” – Green Park Elementary

“Everyone was very professional and prepared. I was very pleased with the educational quality of this trip.” – Young Audiences Charter School

“The students learned the importance of reading and enjoying a story and being a storyteller.” – Arthur Ashe School

“The activities are aligned to the common core standards students are working on.” – Arthur Ashe School

“We have taught and practiced these skills (rhyming words, syllables and sequencing) but today the kids got to explore these in a more creative way.” – Marrero Academy

“Today the students learned that learning can take place anywhere!” – Bethune Elementary

“I loved the props box at the Talk and Play Center. I would love to integrate that activity in a sequence activity center in my classroom.” – Benjamin Franklin Elementary

“The students learned the value and interest of books and reading.” – Benjamin Franklin Elementary

“Presenters were very enthusiastic. GREAT JOB!” – Harahan Elementary

“The trip was awesome! Thanks for the books!” – Harahan Elementary

“I really liked how the activities coordinated with the story – the students were engaged the entire time.” – Harahan Elementary

“All the activities were great and I plan to use all of them in my classroom.” – Bethune Elementary

“We were glad it was free. We don’t get other free trips. Thanks so much!” – Bethune Elementary

“I am definitely going to incorporate more dramatic retelling in my class.” – George Cox Elementary

“The staff were all very enthusiastic and made all the children and adults feel very comfortable.”  
– GT Woods School

“The students learned to enjoy literacy in its different stages.” – Bethune Elementary

### **Schools Served**

- Andrew H Wilson Charter School
- Akili Academy
- AP Tureaud Elementary
- ARISE Academy
- Arthur Ashe Charter School
- Audubon Charter School
- Behrman Elementary
- Benjamin Franklin Elementary
- Bethune Elementary
- Bissonet Plaza Elementary
- Bridgedale Elementary
- Cherbonnier/Rillieux Elementary
- Crocker College Prep
- Edgar P. Harney
- G.T. Woods
- George Cox Elementary
- Green Park Elementary
- Harahan Elementary
- Harney Elementary
- KIPP Central City
- Lawrence D. Crocker College Prep
- Lincoln Elementary School of the Arts
- Marie Riviere School
- Mary Bethune Elementary School
- Mary McLeod Bethune Elementary
- McDonough 32
- Menard H. Nelson Charter School
- Paul Habans Charter School
- Royal Castle
- William J. Fischer
- Young Audiences Charter School

## Appendix E – Development Orientation for Board of Directors

### **How LCM Raises Contributed Income**

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The actual cost of a Museum visit is \$14.00, yet our admission remains \$8.50 in an effort to keep it affordable for all guests. For a family of four, this would be a cost of \$56 versus the current \$34. In order to maintain this affordable cost of admission, we must raise money to carry out our programs. The Development Office of LCM brings in *contributed* revenue--donations, grants, gifts and fundraisers--versus the *earned* income of admissions, memberships, birthday parties, after hours and store sales.

The Development Office is responsible for 45-50% of LCM's annual operating budget, including grant funded programs, unrestricted and restricted giving, and special events. The Development Office consists of the Development Director and the Special Events Coordinator.

#### *Annual Appeal*

Annual appeal (or Annual Fund) is the annual giving program in which donations go directly into the operating budget. These dollars help to fund the educational programs, exhibits and expenses of delivering our mission in the community. The Annual Fund Campaign runs from January 1 through December 31. This year's goal is approximately \$70,000 and we intend to increase the Annual Fund each year. Last year, we raised \$60,000 for the Annual Fund. This is one of the primary areas of targeted growth.

#### *Corporate Sponsorships*

Businesses can support the Museum through a variety of ways. Financially, a business can be a corporate sponsor of an **Education Program, Fundraising Event or Exhibit Sponsorship**. The Development Office will work with the Board and the Board's Development Committee to strategically work a list of corporate prospects for sponsorships. Your connections and relationships with various corporations are vital to this effort.

Another primary area of targeted growth is corporate sponsorship of educational programs. We have aligned our fundraising efforts in this area around our five strategic focus areas—Literacy, Health and Wellness, STEM, Arts and Culture, and Environmental Education.

#### *Foundation Support*

The Museum also receives support from Foundations. Foundation support can be financial support of an event, program (on & off-site), exhibit sponsorship, or general annual support. The Development Office will ask whether any Board members have a relationship with individuals who serve on Foundation Boards, which gives us a position of greater strength when applying for grants.

The Museum has numerous programs that are funded from Grant dollars. These include our Play Power Program, Word Play, Art Trek, Family Fest, Family Camp, Learning Pathways, Literacy Pathways, Sensory Friendly Family Night and others. Grant funds have specific parameters on how the funds can be used and the time frame in which they funds must be used. The funds are obtained through a competitive application process. Grants may range from small amounts (less than \$10,000) to very large (perhaps \$1 million or more for a

capital campaign), and they may come from local, regional, national or federal grant programs.

### *In-Kind Contributions*

Many times the LCM receives tangible contributions that are not cash to support the Museum. This would be an in-kind contribution. If your department would like to seek an in-kind contribution, or has been contacted by someone to donate an item, please coordinate with the Development Office for this process. We receive numerous in-kind contributions and it is important to make sure recognition is given for gifts, as well as that our “ask” efforts are coordinated.

### **Special Events**

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Special events are ways to raise money while engaging volunteers, hosting fun events and giving the Museum a way of getting good publicity.

**Children’s World’s Fair:** A one-day “journey” through eight countries without leaving Julia Street. Each country is represented by a committee of volunteers who assemble a showcase of that country’s culture, food, music, art and contributions. March 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Circus Magic Night:** LCM is allotted a share of special circus tickets that we sell and keep a portion of the profits from. These tickets include access to special areas and activities. June 26.

**CHAIRish the Children:** Our signature adults-only fundraiser. Local artists and others create unique, whimsical chairs that are auctioned. August 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**Festival of Trees:** A month-long display of festive trees decorated by local artists and schools. Family Day draws a large crowd for holiday-themed activities and meeting Mr. Bingle. Date TBD.

### **Planned Giving**

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Individuals engage in gift planning for purposes of long-range giving. Planned giving includes bequests, charitable gift annuities, charitable gift remainders, unitrusts, and other vehicles. Planned giving can allow people to make larger gifts than they ordinarily would while receiving tax and in some cases, income benefits.

LCM has not yet built a Planned Giving Program, but it is a mid- to long- term goal.

## **Funds as a Percentage of All Contributed Revenue**



### **Strategic Priorities Short Term**

- Grow individual giving (Annual Fund)
- Grow program sponsorship (Corporate, foundation)
- Secure funding 12-18 months out

## Appendix F – Mission, Values, Educational Purpose, Vision

### *Louisiana Children's Museum Mission Statement*

The Louisiana Children's Museum promotes hands-on participatory learning for children of all ages. Encouraging discovery through observation, inquiry, creative construction, role-play, problem-solving and free play. The Museum motivates children to develop their cognitive, physical and social skills while enjoying fruitful interaction with adults and peers.

All employees must conduct themselves at all times during the work day in a manner that supports this Mission.

### *Museum Values*

All staff of the Louisiana Children's Museum are expected to do their best in sharing and upholding the following values:

- Professional -Stable -Fun
- Creative -Visitor Centered -Accountable
- Loyal -Dedicated

### *Educational Purpose*

Louisiana Children's Museum strengthens the connection between early learning and lifelong learning by creating interactive experiences that inspire everyday moments of exploration, discovery and learning between children and the adults who care for them.

### *Vision*

The Louisiana Children's Museum will be the regional leader in the field of early childhood education for children, families and educators. On-site, off-site (outreach), and training programs will showcase the optimal, research-based learning on early childhood and play.

## Appendix G – How to Use the Auction Committee Folder in Google Drive

*(Document created by Kathleen Ledet)*

**\*Highlighted in Green = Confirmed**

**\*Highlighted in Yellow = Still needs follow-up ; Item needs to be picked up**

**\*Highlighted in Red = Declined**

**\*NOT highlighted = No follow-up has occurred**

- Each Auction Committee member can view the **2014 Auction List** spreadsheet in the Auction Committee Folder on Google Docs.
- The **first tab (“Auction Master Solicitation List”)** shows every business we have sent a solicitation letter to. You have been assigned businesses from this list. Your assignment can be found in the **“Who is Following Up?”** column.
- As you are making a follow-up phone call, if a business is on board, fill out an **Auction Donor Form** (This form can be found in the Google Doc Folder). Please get **all** of the information asked on the form. This is important for the program!
- Then after the call is done, use that same **“Who is Following Up?”** column to record any info you have gathered. For instance, if I call Adler’s, in the “Who is Following Up” column Adler’s, I would type, "Kathleen called. Needs time to think about it. Will call back in 1 week."
- If a business confirms or declines their participation during that call, go ahead and type, “Confirm” or “Decline” in the **“Confirm or Decline”** column. Highlight them in **green, red, or yellow** depending on the status after the call.
- If a business does confirm their participation highlight them in green and then go to the **second or third tab** at the bottom of the page called **“Confirmed Auction Items Under 300”** and **“Confirmed Auction Items Over 300.”** This is where you will put all of the information that you gathered from the **Auction Donor Form** you filled out. ***\*Note: You only need to fill in the columns that are highlighted in blue for this spreadsheet.\****

## Vita

Kathleen Ledet grew up along the waters of Bayou Lafourche in Golden Meadow, Louisiana. She graduated *summa cum laude* with a B.A. in film and communications and a minor in English from the University of New Orleans (UNO) in 2007. She worked in film production for seven years on documentaries, commercials, independent films, and television shows. She produced the award-winning documentary, *Can't Stop the Water* (2013), which tells the story of the disappearing Native American Cajun community of Isle de Jean Charles, Louisiana. In 2012, she received UNO's Master's Award Scholarship, which she used to earn her M.A. in arts administration.